

The Change in Vocabularies of Freedoms and Rights  
in Egyptian Political Writings  
from al-Ṭaḥṭāwī until 1952  
A Diachronic Approach to Lexical Semantics

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## Abstract

Human rights terms can be understood and categorised in different ways, according to various standards, in different periods of history. Studying the development of these vocabularies in their historical context provides the grounds for understanding the history of ideas involving human rights.

This research used a diachronic approach to examine the changes in the use of terms associated with freedoms and rights in Egyptian political writings in three periods between 1869 and 1952. Three main sources were used as an analytic corpus: (1) Al-Ṭaḥṭawī's books; (2) Muḥammad ʿAbduh's political articles in *Al-Waḡāʾiḥ* newspaper (published 1880-1882), and (3) political articles published in *Al-Ahrām* newspaper (1876-1952). The semantic changes identified were assessed using two criteria: First, changes in the terms and expressions that were used to convey types of freedoms and rights were evaluated, and second, changes in the contexts in which these terms were used in three chronological periods were assessed. These periods corresponded to the period of Al-Ṭaḥṭawī (1869-1873); the period of the ʿUrābī Revolution to prior to the Revolution of 1919 (1879-1918), and the period from the Revolution of 1919 until the end of 1952, the year of the July Revolution. The first period registered a lexical contribution represented by the production of new expressions of freedoms and rights, with very little semantic contribution. In the second period, a limited lexical and semantic expansion was found, involving an increase in terms and the entitlements to which they referred; these terms and entitlements were mainly confined to the private sphere of individuals, and new entitlements were applicable to people who did not oppose the political authorities. In the third period, terms were found to refer to entitlements for individuals in the public sphere; this was considered to be, at the linguistic level, a lexical and semantic development. In all cases, the meaning of the terms was dependent on context and thus necessarily subject to cultural and political interpretations.

The study concludes with recommendations for considering the evolution of Arabic political vocabularies (mainly vocabularies of freedoms and rights) in different historical periods involving different political circumstances.



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Photo courtesy of: Belal Khaled

Gaza, Ramadan 2014: Displaced after an Israeli ground invasion, a family break their fast at a UNRWA school in Khan Younis. A painting on the wall behind them shows people raising banners with the following human rights terms in Arabic:

Top row, left to right: *ḥaqq al-karāmah* (right to dignity); *ḥaqq al-ʿamal* (right to work); *ḥaqq al-lujūʾ* (right to refuge); *ḥaqq al-musāwāh* (right to equality); *ḥaqq al-taʿlīm* (right to education); *ḥaqq al-ʾamn* (right to security).

Bottom row, left to right: *ḥaqq al-tasāmḥ* (right to tolerance); *ḥaqq al-amn al-ijtimāʿī* (right to social security); *ḥaqq al-ḥurriyyah* (right to freedom).



*To those who deserve the Meaning!*

*I dedicate this thesis to those in Arab countries who observe terms of freedom and rights in newspapers, on banners, on walls, in news broadcasts, and during protests.*

*They deserve more than empty words; they deserve to actually experience the meaning of those words in their lives.*



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## LIST OF TRANSLITERATION SAMPLE

### CONSONANTS

ب	b	ز	z	ق	Q
ت	t	س	s	ك	K
ة	h/t	ش	sh	ل	L
ث	th	ص	ṣ	م	M
ج	j	ض	ḍ	ن	N
ح	ḥ	ط	ṭ	ه	H
خ	kh	ظ	ẓ	و	W
د	d	ع	ʿ	ي	Y
ذ	dh	غ	gh	ء	'
ر	r	ف	f		

### VOWELS

#### Long

ā  
ū  
ī

#### Short

a  
i  
u

#### Doubled

iyy (final form = / ī /)  
uww (final form = / ū /)

#### Diphthongs

aw  
ay





# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### 1.0. Introduction

Philosophers and intellectuals have often been concerned with human rights, and in the last few decades, this topic has attracted a great deal of attention in disciplines such as philosophy, politics, sociology, the arts, law, and many others. The notion of human rights could be considered central to the history of liberation in human societies. Across various historical periods and nations, people have fought to be treated according to moral principles that guarantee them justice, dignity and rights, and that protect them from injustice and indignity. Individuals want to be free of any controlling power that prevents them from acting according to their own will. According to this view, these values have constituted a 'driving force' leading to a range of past and present revolutions, declarations, and struggles in the name of human rights (Clapham, 2007; see: Donnelly, 1989; Munaysī, 2002; Nickel, 2014).<sup>1</sup>

Political revolutions, motivated by the values of freedom and dignity, have transformed nations, and some of these revolutions have come to be seen as milestones in the history of human societies. They not only brought about concrete changes in all aspects of life, including the economy and social and political institutions, but their impact extended to the conceptual level, with new ideas and concepts emerging as a result of political change and liberation movements. New views, perceptions and understandings of the values and concepts of liberation – encompassing the concepts of freedom, human rights, democracy, and others – started to appear. Such new ideas are communicated at multiple levels: youth may be keen to take part in new organisations, workers may stand up for their rights, authors and poets may express these values in a myriad of ways in their literature, social and political activists may call for different types of rights for different groups of people, and politicians and

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis adopts this view of the notion of human rights, based on arguments from the references cited above, but as with most other ideas, some doubts and alternative views exist (cf. Beitz, 2009).

philosophers may discuss different norms or categorisations of rights and freedoms.

These concepts and variations in the categories of rights are expressed in language through sets of vocabularies and expressions. The evolution in types and categories of human rights over time – at different stages in the history of liberation – is mirrored in the changing language, and this indicates the significant role of language not only in expressing and reflecting, but also in forming, shaping, and constructing the transformation of ideas in a society.

Arab nations are among those that have been inspired by, and desire for themselves, values of human rights such as freedom, dignity and justice. Since 2011, several Arab countries have witnessed political events that demonstrated a growing public awareness and practice of freedoms and human rights within the region. Wide-scale protests in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen broke out and spread across the Middle East. These revolutions are considered to be milestones in the modern history of liberation in their countries, not only because they aimed to change regimes, introduce democracy and free elections, and establish and protect people's rights, but also because they brought about changes in ideas and concepts. These, in turn, were reflected in changes to the language and vocabularies used to convey these new ideas and concepts.

Egypt is one of the nations that have a long history of liberation struggles. The recent Egyptian revolution, which followed enormous civil protests, began on 25 January 2011 and was one of the largest of the revolutions that have been collectively labelled 'the Arab spring'. A great mass of people with diverse backgrounds, representing different ages, genders, classes, and ideologies, gathered to call for the overthrow of the Mubārak regime. This image of huge protests represented a promise of a brighter future with a new era of freedom, and the term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) became a key term in these significant events. People called for freedom, and they chanted, sang, and waved banners speaking of freedom and rights. Through tweets, comments, and images posted on social media and the Internet, these words of freedom became important symbols of the demands of the revolution (see Bassiouny, 2014).

This significant revolution was simply one episode in a long series of revolutions and significant political events, going back many years, in the struggle for the liberation of Egypt. At various stages throughout their long history, Egyptians from many walks of life have expended a great deal of effort to achieve freedom and liberation for themselves and their nation. Various political events have taken place in different historical eras, with the goals being to eradicate injustice and slavery and to achieve liberation for the nation, along with justice, freedom and rights for individuals. Among these revolts were the public resistance against the French campaign (1798-1801); the ʿUrābī Revolution (1879-1882) against the corruption of the European-supported leader, Khedive Tawfīq (r. 1879-1892); the Revolution of 1919 against the British occupation of Egypt; and the July Revolution of 1952, which overthrew King Fārūq (r. 1936-1952) and established the Republic of Egypt.

Although these revolutions broke out against domestic regimes in some cases, and against foreign occupation in others, they were always inspired by the values of rights and freedoms. This long history of liberation has evolved significantly, not only at the social and political levels but also at the intellectual level. This level encompasses how people perceive and understand new ideas, objects and processes, as well as how these ideas, objects and processes are constructed and expressed in the language. Since “*language expresses cultural reality*” (Kramsch, 1998, p. 3), the context of liberation in the country must be taken into account when studying the change of vocabularies involved in the notion of freedoms and rights. This is the central concern of this study, which has the following objectives.

### **1.1. Aims of the research**

This research aims to trace the semantic changes that occurred in the vocabularies of freedoms and rights in a selected group of Egyptian political writings over a specific period of time. The time period chosen begins with the political writings of Rifāʿah al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (d. 1873), the Egyptian intellectual, translator and journalist who has been described as “the first considerable political thinker of modern Egypt” (Hourani, 1970, p. 54). It ends in 1952, the year that witnessed the beginning of the July Revolution, when a group of

military officers rose up against King Fārūq (r. 1936-1952); the result was the establishment of the Republic of Egypt in June 1953.

This research seeks to examine the vocabularies (i.e., terms and expressions) that conveyed types and categories of freedoms and rights in the political writings of a selected group of Egyptian intellectuals, politicians and activists, and to observe how they changed and/or were maintained over this period. The research adopts the assumption that these terms and expressions are a linguistic manifestation of the range of thoughts, beliefs, principles, and attitudes that were observed in the social and political realities of the country. (Ayalon, 1985, p. 823, 1987, p. viii). As Diller (2008) states, studying the history of how a vocabulary is used establishes an understanding of the history of the ideas and thoughts involved (p. 123).

By adopting a historical approach to semantics, this research aims to trace the usage of vocabularies that express different types of freedoms and rights, as recorded in the texts, in order to understand the attitudes and perceptions about these concepts over time.

The hypothesis is that development and change in the vocabularies of freedoms and rights arise from the prevailing issues and concerns of the society. The most significant ideas and concepts are expressed in vocabularies that reflect the experiences and activities of the society (see Chaika, 1982, p. 195) and that therefore reflect its struggles. Through this approach, it can be seen that when concepts of human rights are expressed in Arabic political literature, they may differ in various ways from the original understanding in terms of what they signify (even if they were first introduced to Arabs from Western literature); in other words, there may be a variety of disparate meanings. Even when dealing with generalised and international notions such as human rights, culture always plays a role in the way that people understand and express ideas, and texts are always shaped by the circumstances and context in which they are written. This research does not seek to assess the level of the practice of human rights; its concern instead is with the collective structure of the vocabulary and how it changes, develops or continues over time.

These changes are treated as an indication of the concerns regarding rights and freedoms which Egyptian intellectuals and political writers shared at different points of time between 1869 and 1952.

The time period selected has political and cultural significance in addition to the linguistic interest. It spans three important political revolutions:

- the °Urābī Revolution (1879-1882),
- the Revolution of 1919, and
- the July Revolution of 1952.

Therefore, the period is of methodological importance for research that aims to trace the manner of change in vocabularies and their meanings, and it justifies the decision to consider the revolutions to be stopping points in the historical investigation of the vocabularies.

## **1.2. Research questions**

In order to achieve the research aims, the following questions are addressed:

- (1) What are the terms and expressions used to describe the types of freedoms and rights at different points in time within the period from al-Taḥṭāwī's writings to the end of 1952?
- (2) How did the terms and expressions that convey different types of freedoms and rights change over time? Specifically, did they expand in a way that suggests greater, or more valued, freedoms and rights, or did they contract and thus suggest fewer or less valued freedoms and rights?
- (3) In what ways did the collective structure of these vocabularies reflect or indicate the notion of freedoms and rights in each period? What are the characteristics of this world view in each period, and how did these characteristics change over time?

### **1.3. Establishing a framework**

To answer the research questions, this research adopts a diachronic approach to lexical semantics. Semantics is the particular area of linguistics which explores the meaning of linguistic expression, and the sub-discipline which addresses the study of the meanings of terms and expressions is lexical semantics (Biggam, 2012, p. 9). Research that seeks to trace a given vocabulary and its meanings across different periods, or points in time, is said to employ a diachronic approach to the semantic field, in which a group of meaning-related vocabularies are studied systematically.

This type of research requires establishing the means by which inquiries can be addressed in diachronic semantics. Given that the data collected are from a specific period in history, the researcher is able to track changes in meaning based on how different writers use the same word (or groups of words) over points in time. Diachronic semantics is interested in texts or collections of writings in which particular words appear in use at different times in history; by comparing those words, a change in meaning or sense can be detected (Allan & Robinson, 2012, pp. 1-11).

This section will outline a group of technical terms which refer to the approach as well as the means adopted in this research. The terms 'semantics', 'diachronic approach', 'semantic field', and 'corpus study' are explained in the following sections.

#### **1.3.1. Semantics**

Biggam (2012) argues that semantics – unlike other disciplines of linguistics such as phonology or syntax – “does not have such clear limits” (p. 9). She justifies her argument by saying:

The semanticist needs not only a broad knowledge of the various sub-fields of linguistic enquiry, but s/he will also benefit from an understanding of other disciplines such as anthropology, psychology and philosophy (p. 9).

This understanding of semantics is in line with the view of (Izutsu, 1964/2008), who writes:

Semantics, thus understood, is a kind of *weltanschauungslehre*, a study of the nature and structure of the world-view of a nation at this or that significant period of its history, conducted by means of a methodological analysis of the major cultural concepts the nation has produced for itself and crystallized into the key-words of its language (p. 3).

Semantics, according to this view, is the study of how “a particular philosophy or view of life” and/or “a conception of the world” (Allen, Fowler, & Fowler, 1990, p. 1394) is expressed in language. This suggests that it is the semantic structure of vocabularies of freedoms and rights that represents the existing and contextual freedoms and rights, and that this may illustrate how a certain group of people perceives, develops, and practices these rights. It is worth noting that the world view of freedoms and rights (which is the focus of this research) should be seen as an outcome of a collective involvement in a society. It is, according to Dilthey, not merely an intellectual outcome but also one of the other aspects of participation and activism involved in the notion of the actual life (as cited in Safran, 1981, p. 39).

In order to address the research questions, this study takes into account the geopolitical context of Egypt's liberation by examining the political and social events in different periods, in relation to the analysis of vocabularies and world view expressed. This is crucial because these non-linguistic factors contribute to our understanding of the meanings of the vocabularies, and they moulded the way the people of these periods understood the ideas in question.

This expectation that non-linguistic factors contribute to understanding the meanings is justified by the close relationship between language and culture. Kramsch (1998) explains that vocabularies express experiences, thoughts, or experiences, as well as people's perspectives, opinions and assumptions (p. 3). She contends that these are among the different features of culture (p. 10) and that “*language symbolizes cultural reality*” (p. 3) by providing the linguistic signs by which cultural reality is communicated, both verbally and in written form. Therefore, linguistic expressions cannot be studied independently of their context. In her words:

Taken out of their original social and historical context, linguistic signs can be emptied of the fullness of their meanings and used as symbolic shorthand. For example, words like ‘democracy’,



‘freedom’, ‘choice’, when uttered by politicians and diplomats may lose much of their denotative and even their rich connotative meaning and become political symbols (Kramsch, 1998, p. 21-22).

Therefore, it is important to consider the historical/cultural context in order to investigate and analyse the content of meaning. We cannot, for example, understand the intended meaning of the term *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* (freedom of work) as published in a text in the 1880s unless we grasp the types of jobs practised by labourers, as well as the laws in place, at the time. Likewise, we cannot analyse and understand the meaning conveyed by the term *ḥuqūq al-mar’ah* (women’s rights) as used in texts published in the 1900s, nor can we trace the changes in its meaning, without examining the rights and entitlements provided for women at that time and then tracing the sociopolitical factors that led to the movement for, and improvements in, women’s rights.

In order to produce an accurate and reliable analysis, we cannot assume that terms have always been understood the way that we understand them today. It is important to recognise that the types and categories of freedoms and rights do not necessarily reflect the categories and classifications of human rights as stated in any political standard, e.g., the United Nations General Assembly’s 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes its own categories of human rights. Instead, vocabularies found in the texts are expected to reflect the thoughts, understanding, and views of their writers in regard to what constitutes the freedoms and rights of people. This is in line with Izutsu’s view of semantics – which is adopted in this research – as a world view “crystallized into the key-words” (Izutsu, 1964/2008, p. 3).

### **1.3.2. The diachronic approach**

To incorporate the dimension of time into a study of language, one can choose from two radically different approaches: synchronic and diachronic, as de Saussure (1916/1993) explains:

Everything is synchronic which relates to the static aspect of our science, and diachronic everything which concerns evolution. Likewise *synchrony* and *diachrony* will designate respectively a linguistic state and a phase of evolution (p. 81).

If we narrow the discussion to semantics, the synchronic approach deals with the study of meaning at a specific point of time, while the diachronic approach is concerned with the study of the meanings over different periods of time (Bynon, 1986, p. 1; Izutsu, 1964/2008, pp. 32-35). The main concern of the diachronic approach is to record the semantic behaviour of the words over a period of time. Since it is “a piece of truth” that “every language is always changing” (Trask, 2009, p. 1), this seems to justify the fact that:

a great deal of work that has been done on semantics has been of a historical kind, and it was noted earlier that the term *semantics* was first used to refer to the development and change of meaning (Palmer, 1976, p. 11).

Ullmann (1983) refers to the notion of semantic change as the “prime task” of semanticists:

Most semanticists took it for granted that their prime task was to study changes of meaning, to explore their causes, to classify them according to logical, psychological or other criteria, and, if possible, to formulate the general ‘laws’ and tendencies underlying them (p. 6).

The primary focus of this approach, which led the discipline of lexical semantics in the early period, from approximately 1830 to 1930, is the examination of the change in meaning over specific periods of time. The outcomes of this approach consist of a classified set of types of semantic change, including expansion of meaning, narrowing of meaning, and others (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 1).

Thus, this research records the meanings of terms and expressions that convey several types of freedoms and rights at different points of time in Egypt, from the first usage of these terms in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s political writings until the end of 1952. There are two reasons for the importance of the historical approach to semantics for this research:

- (1) This semantic tracking alerts the semanticist to the necessity of studying the history of vocabularies in use, for this contributes to recording the history of ideas. As mentioned earlier, tracking the changes in a group of expressions and their meanings contributes to the understanding of

people's attitudes and awareness of the notion of change over different points of time.

- (2) Semantic tracking also fills a gap in the field of historical semantic studies in the Arabic language, since the history of these expressions has not yet been systematically examined to the best of the knowledge of the researcher.

### **1.3.3. Semantic field**

In the words of Izutsu (1964/2008):

Real historical semantics, as we understand it now, begins only when we study the history of words in terms of the whole static systems to which they belong, when, in other words, we compare with one another two or more 'surfaces' which one and the same language, say Arabic, presents at different stages of its history, separated from each other by an interval of time (p. 35).

In line with this statement, it has been argued that it is crucial to the diachronic approach to semantics that we take into account the overall analysis of the words and expressions that have a semantic relevance. Thus, terms and expressions should not be treated individually, as if they are in "a loose bag of words" (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 48), but instead should be analysed in conjunction with related terms and expressions that comprise a system, or network, of vocabularies. This suggests an integrated vision of the vocabularies when we analyse the history of a word. This view recognises the central role of a "systematic study" of "a collection of sense-related words which delineate each other mutually" in understanding a given expression (p. 54). Geeraerts (2010) explains that this 'structuralist' perspective refers to de Saussure, whereas the theory of the semantic field refers to Trier.<sup>2</sup>

One of the main terms (as well as theories) in this structural approach to semantics is the semantic field, which can be defined as a set of vocabularies that can reasonably be grouped together because they can all be used to refer to a specific subject or concept. The vocabularies in a semantic field are

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<sup>2</sup> Geeraerts (2010) discusses the framework of the theory in detail, providing background information on its emergence and development (see pp. 53-70). Here, I am focusing on the main principles of the theory.

interrelated but are not necessarily synonyms. One standard example is the set of kinship terms, including ‘father’, ‘mother’, ‘son’ ‘daughter’, ‘brother’, ‘sister’ and so on, which identify the person’s sex, generation within the family and, in some languages, whether they are on the maternal or paternal side (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 337). Semantic field theory refers to the idea that these semantically related vocabularies are organised in interconnected systems such that changes to one vocabulary may cause changes in other parts of the system (Löbner, 2011, pp. 224-228).

The vocabularies in a semantic field are categorised into several systems according to their semantic relations. A semantic field represents a complex network of relations and poses many questions with respect to methodology. In fact, there are no pre-established categorisations or rules to be followed when we are trying to constitute a semantic field for a group of vocabularies.<sup>3</sup>

Kay (2010) describes the categorisation of a semantic field as “an art rather than a science” because “no single set of principles is sufficient to encompass the whole” (p. 269). In this research, a methodological approach to semantic field is adopted for the analysis. The vocabularies (i.e., terms and expressions) of freedoms and rights are categorised into groups, each of which is a sub-semantic field referring to a certain category of human rights. These involve, for example, personal, religious, economic, intellectual, social, and political freedoms and rights, among others. Examples of these terms include *ḥurriyyah shakhṣiyyah* (personal freedom), *ḥurriyyah dīniyyah* (religious freedom), and *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom), as well as expressions of rights such as *ḥuqūq madaniyyah* (civil rights), *ḥuqūq fikriyyah* (intellectual rights), and *ḥuqūq al-mar’ah* (women’s rights).

As noted earlier, the categorisation of semantic field may differ from one researcher to another, and it may also vary from one period to another. Here, the categories of freedoms and rights are not expected to reflect any given political standard of human rights, since we are observing the development of

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<sup>3</sup> There are several examples of semantic field categories in Chapter Two, which provides a review of books applying the theory of semantic field, dealing with several groups of vocabularies e.g., (Sawāṭī, 2013; Ḥusām al-Dīn, 2000, 2001).

the notion as expressed in actual texts. We do not adopt any pre-established categorisation because we are:

dealing with structures which are endlessly flexible. For both categories and individual words, the placing is often a choice between better or worse rather than right or wrong (Kay, 2010, p. 264).

#### **1.3.4. Mode of research: a corpus study**

As previously pointed out, the term 'diachronic semantics' is used to refer to any semantic project that is historical in nature, i.e., which traces the semantic change across different points of time over a specific period. This historical record requires consulting and investigating texts belonging to the historical period in question. Therefore, it was decided that a representative sample of texts taken from the following sources would be used to identify the collective vocabularies of rights and freedoms in Egyptian political writings during the period under consideration:

- (1) The writings of Rifāʿah al-Ṭaḥṭāwī were chosen because he was the first Arab political writer who expressed terms of freedoms and rights. His writings include the first attestation of the use, in Arabic modern political texts, of terms that express types and categories of freedoms in a modern, rather than classical, meaning of *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1834/2011, p. 199fn 2).
- (2) A group of political articles published in two Egyptian newspapers: *Al-Ahrām* and *Al-Waḳāʿ* / *Al-Miṣriyyah*, written by a group of Egyptian writers including intellectuals, members of political parties, activists, and others, with different ideologies, orientations, and positions.

The collected texts are categorised on a chronological basis into three sub-corpora, with each corpus representing one time period. As mentioned previously, I decided to consider political revolutions that occurred in Egypt in the period under consideration (i.e., the ʿUrābī Revolution of 1879-1882, the Revolution of 1919, and the July Revolution in 1952) as stopping points because a revolution is one of the most influential political events, having significant repercussions on the social and cultural life of the country. The language – like other aspects of society – is also expected to be affected by

these revolutions. In each period, the data are analysed synchronically and then compared with the data of the other periods to investigate the semantic changes.

## **1.4. Chapter outline**

This section provides an overview of the structure of the thesis. Details of the chapters are as follows.

### **Chapter One: Introduction**

Chapter One presents the theoretical background of the research and identifies the aims, the importance of the research, and the research questions. It also establishes the framework and identifies and explains the relevant terms for data analysis, including: 'semantics', 'diachronic approach', and 'semantic field'.

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Chapter Two offers an overview of the previous literature in the field of historical semantics, with a focus on political language in Arabic. The goal here is to identify the research gap that the current research addresses. This chapter examines previous studies that have been done in three areas:

- 1) semantic studies of Arabic lexica of human rights,
- 2) studies on semantic field, and
- 3) studies using the diachronic approach to semantics.

The main argument postulated is that the Arabic literature in these areas lacks studies that register the history of the vocabularies of rights and freedom.

### **Chapter Three: A Historical Overview of the Liberation in Egypt, with Reference to Vocabularies of Freedoms and Rights**

Chapter Three discusses the implications of the geopolitical context for the evolution of vocabularies of freedoms and rights. The significant political events, revolutions, and other experiences which occurred in the period under discussion are considered in order to understand the underlying contextual

factors of the political writings and to shed light on the relationship between the non-linguistic factors in the geopolitical context and the linguistic change.

#### **Chapter Four: Research Methodology**

Chapter Four describes the research methodology and addresses the process of data collection that was undertaken in this research; it explains the importance of the selected data sources and justifies the decisions taken regarding this data. It also describes in detail the methods that were used to divide and categorise the data, along with the methodology applied in analysing it.

#### **Chapter Five: Discussion of Terms of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the First Period (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's Writings 1869-1873)**

Chapter Five presents a detailed discussion of the samples of terms involving freedoms and rights from the texts of Rifā<sup>ḥ</sup> al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (published in the period between 1869 and 1873). These terms are classified into different categories according to the type of entitlements to which they refer. The original passages in which the terms are found are cited and translated, and there is a discussion of the semantic and cultural context involving each term in order to explain what entitlements are meant.

#### **Chapter Six: Analysis of the World View of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the First Period (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's Writings 1869-1873)**

Chapter Six examines the structure of the terms from the first period, in order to discuss al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's view of freedoms and rights and to assess his actual contribution in introducing and developing these ideas. It also demonstrates how the range of freedoms changed over different historical periods.

#### **Chapter Seven: Discussion of Terms of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Second Period (Political Articles 1879-1918)**

Chapter Seven discusses the sample terms of freedoms and rights found in the political articles in the second period, from 1879 (when the <sup>ḥ</sup>Urābī Revolution began) until 1918 (a year prior to the next revolution). It uses the same format as in Chapter Five.

### **Chapter Eight: Analysis of the World View of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Second Period (Political Articles 1879-1918)**

The concern in Chapter Eight is to determine the range of freedoms and how they changed. Freedoms and rights, along with specific entitlements, are discussed to illustrate the view of freedoms and rights expressed in the texts of the second period, between 1879 and 1918. This enables assessment of the development or continuity of the terms concerning freedom and rights that were previously identified.

### **Chapter Nine: Discussion of Terms of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Third Period (Political Articles 1919-1952)**

Chapter Nine discusses the terms of freedom and rights in the political articles published in the third period, from 1919 (the year that witnessed the Revolution of 1919) to the end of 1952 (the year that witnessed the July Revolution). This takes the same form as in Chapters Five and Seven.

### **Chapter Ten: Analysis of the World View of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Third Period (Political Articles 1919-1952)**

Chapter Ten addresses how the concepts of freedom and rights were understood in the third period. Following the same form of analysis as Chapters Six and Eight, it discusses the view of freedoms and rights in this period, in light of the structure of the semantic field. The ultimate goal is to examine the evolution of the perception and understanding of these ideas over this period.

### **Chapter Eleven: Conclusion**

Chapter Eleven summarises the findings of this research, illustrates its main contributions, and proposes topics for future research.





## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

#### 2.0. Introduction

The literature review aims “to ascertain the current state of research in the field” (Williams & Chesterman, 2002, p. 3). The ultimate goal is twofold: to explore the existing knowledge on these issues, and to pinpoint the research gap that the current research attempts to fill, and that “add[s] to the sum of knowledge” (p. 3). To achieve this goal, this chapter is organised into three main sections to provide an overview of the relevant previous studies, undertaken in both Arabic and English.

- Section 2.1 introduces some of the studies previously undertaken on vocabularies (i.e., terms and expressions) as well as concepts (i.e., ideas and perceptions) of freedoms and rights.
- Section 2.2 highlights a group of linguistic studies which apply the theory of semantic field to different groups of vocabularies (e.g., politics, social and cultural life, etc.); reference is also made to the significance of applying this approach and the methods of application involved.
- Section 2.3 investigates a number of studies in which the diachronic approach to semantic change (which falls within the sub-discipline of historical lexical semantics) is a central methodology.

These reviews will help to determine the current gaps in the field of Arabic semantics, and they will serve to establish an appropriate research methodology to be used in the following chapters for answering the research questions.

#### 2.1. Previous studies on the vocabularies and concepts of human rights

Here I look at studies on vocabularies (i.e., terms and expressions) and concepts (i.e., ideas and perceptions) of freedom in Arabic – e.g., *ḥurriyyah*

(freedom), *ḥaqq* (right), and *ḥuqūq al-insān* (human rights). The objective is twofold: to record the contribution of these studies to the previous literature, and to position the current study in this field.

**2.1.1. al-Jayyūsī (ed.) (2010): *Ḥuqūq al-insān fī al-fikr al-ʿArabī: Dirāsāt fī al-nuṣūṣ* [Human rights in Arab thought: Textual analysis]<sup>4</sup>**

The notion of human rights and their cultural implications are investigated in this extensive collection of thirty-eight papers written by a group of scholars from varied disciplines, including philosophy, sociology, anthropology, psychology, history, arts, literature, media, law and politics. The contributors come from various Arab countries including Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen.<sup>5</sup> In the preface, al-Jayyūsī unveils the central goal of the study, which is to explore, from an Arab perspective, not only contemporary human rights but also historical ideas of human rights from earlier times when they were less apparent (p. 9).

In light of the above statement, two points can be emphasised. The issue of human rights is not just a modern phenomenon but is deeply rooted across historical eras; consequently, examining the issue of human rights requires that the terms used in each historical period be contextualised within the cultural life experienced at that time. This will lead to a better understanding of the meanings of these expressions as they were used.

This book offers both an applied and a theoretical investigation focusing on an examination of the vocabularies (i.e., terms and expressions) as well as the concepts (i.e., ideas and perceptions) of human rights in several types of text, including religious texts (e.g., the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth), literary texts (e.g., Arabic novels and stories), philosophical/intellectual texts (e.g., writings of Arab thinkers in different periods of time), and legal and political texts (e.g., proclamations and constitutions). This adds to the justification of approaching

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<sup>4</sup> This is the English title as given on the inner title page of the Arabic book.

<sup>5</sup> Among the contributors are Muḥammad ʿĀ. al-Jābirī; an Islamic intellectual and cleric; Burhān Ghalyūn, former head of the Syrian National Council (a representative authority for Syrian opposition, established in August 2011 after the outbreak of the Syrian revolution); and Muḥammad Arkūn, a secular intellectual who is interested in the critique of Arab and Islamic thought.

the issue of human rights from a specific perspective, relying on written data as a primary source.

Al-Jayyūsī stresses the historical background of the concept of human rights and argues that Arabs recognised the issue of human rights from the early stages of their history (e.g., the pre-Islāmic period). She contends that the main inspiration for the realisation of human rights is the human conscience, within which the values of human rights, such as rights and justice, are remarkably elevated (ibid). With the revelation of Islam, these values were both fostered and expanded by the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* (i.e., the Prophetic traditions: his actions, sayings and approvals), argue al-Jābirī (2010), al-Sāmarrā'ī (2010), and others in their selections. Kawtharānī (2010) and al-Ṣāyidī (2010), on other hand, illustrate and discuss the notion of freedoms and rights in the modern age, in the context of modern states as well as modern revolutions, where these values have been reframed and understood in a different manner.

Bearing in mind this long history of human rights in Arab thought, argues al-Jayyūsī (2010), it is surprising that there is such a wide gap in Arab countries between the theory and its practical application (pp. 11-13). There is a great deal of evidence showing that the issue of human rights has always been apparent across the various stages of Arab history, yet the values raised for discussion are still not practised in large parts of the Arab world. Nevertheless, examining the gap between theory and practice on this issue within the Arab context falls outside the boundaries of this research, although it does shed some light on underlying factors. Instead, the current study is focused on semantics, and the ultimate goal is to understand changes in meaning as motivated and perhaps unpredictable, but not random, phenomena.

An example of the examination of the concepts of human rights can be found in al-Jābirī (2010), which examines how the terms *ḥuqūq* (rights) and *ʿadl* (justice) are used in the Islāmic Arabic texts. For instance, in examining the concept of *ḥaqq* (right) within the writings of Islamic jurists – *fuqahā'*, al-Jābirī argues that the term expands to convey six distinct meanings:

- 1) *ḥuqūq Allāh* (duties toward God),
- 2) *ḥuqūq al-nās* (people's rights),

- 3) *ḥuqūq nafs al-insān* (rights of one's self)
- 4) *ḥuqūq al-ḥayawān* (animal rights),
- 5) *ḥaqq al-rāʿī* (patron's rights) and
- 6) *ḥaqq al-raʿiyyah* (subjects' rights).

These terms can be employed collectively to unveil a structure or scheme related to the notion of human rights as it exists at a certain point in time. Similarly, other writers analysed other Islamic texts, such as the Ḥadīths (Prophet Muḥammad's sayings) in the case study of Maḥmūd (2010), and *Ṣaḥīfat al-Madīnah* (the Charter of Madinah) by Nuwayhid (2010), who points out that this Charter – which was established by Prophet Muḥammad in Madinah – is “the first contract in Islam that recognises human rights” (p. 166). It has been argued that these texts (collectively) include a structure that gave people rights, including the right to live with dignity, safety and security, in addition to specific types of entitlements for non-Muslims, women, and slaves.

Other papers are concerned with themes of the rights that emerged from the political struggle in some Arab countries in search of liberation. Case studies include human rights in the discourse of the Yemeni National Movement (al-Ṣāyidī, 2010) and the rights of Palestinian refugees (Abū Sittah, 2010).

It is clear that the examination of human rights within given texts and contexts is both viable and empirical. Identifying the different themes involved in notions of human rights is better accomplished by analysing the literature referring to a particular event or experience at a certain period of time. On the other hand, the chronological dimension seems to be far from the focus of this significant work, despite the papers within it which make a valuable contribution to understanding various views and practices involving human rights in different Arabic societies over different periods.

#### **2.1.2. Rosenthal (1960): *The Muslim concept of freedom prior to the nineteenth century***

This study examines a large collection of texts of Islamic literature with the aim of understanding how the idea of freedom was perceived by a group of Muslim writers prior to the nineteenth century. Rosenthal considers the concept of

freedom to be an essential part of human history and civilisation, one that is connected to almost every other aspect of human thought. He writes:

Most authors who have something of importance to say are involved in the problem of freedom. Even if they are not expressly concerned with it, their attitude toward freedom can be reconstructed from their works (p. vii).

Based on this view, Rosenthal infers various views of freedom by referring to texts from different periods of time, in the interest of investigating how the term was defined. For example, he notes that in the poems of Dhū al-Rimmah (ca. 700), the term *ḥurr* is always associated with noble qualities of character in the metaphorical sense of 'noble' or 'good', opposite to 'slave' (p. 9). On the other hand, the term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) is absent, as a technical term, in the writings of Muslim jurists (p. 14).

Rosenthal presents several definitions of the concept of freedom in various types of Islamic writings on theology, philosophy, law, and jurisprudence. He emphasises that the subject of freedom was not one to which classical Muslim writers gave great thought. He not only offers a rich discussion on the notion of freedom, but he also opens up further research in the field, especially with reference to classical Islamic thought. It is clear, though, that Rosenthal merely presents a synchronic analysis of the concept of freedom as understood by different writers, without making any comparisons among these different lines of thought. More importantly, he does not examine the issue from a diachronic perspective, which is what the current research seeks to accomplish. Moreover, Rosenthal does not create any link between the use of freedom in a given sense and the cultural life at that specific time.

### **2.1.3. Bush (2011): *Continuity and change in the concept of freedom through three generations of the modern Arab Renaissance (Nahda)***

A third study which seeks to examine the concept of freedom as a central notion of human rights vocabularies is this master's dissertation by Stephen Bush. As the title indicates, it traces the change and continuity in the concept of freedom across the writings of a group of Arabs intellectuals and reformers who represent three generations; they are °Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jabartī (d.1825/6),

Rifā<sup>°</sup>ah al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (d.1873), Buṭrus al-Bustānī (d.1883), Farah Anṭūn (d. 1922), and Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1935).

Bush examines the concepts (i.e., abstract thoughts), rather than the vocabularies (i.e., terms and expressions), of freedom. He strongly argues that the absence of the term *ḥurriyyah* in al-Jabartī's writings does not mean that the concept itself did not exist in Arab thought before the French campaign in Egypt (1798-1801):

°Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's (1754-1825/6) chronicle of the occupation reveals that he possessed the concept of freedom despite the lack of an Arabic word to identify it. Therefore, when Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi (1801-73) translated the French term *liberté* into Arabic, through a semantic expansion of the word *hurriyah*, he was naming rather than introducing the concept (p. v).

Bush justifies his use of the theory of semantic field to provide evidence for his contention by saying that:

One of the main advantages of this school of conceptual history is that, unlike historical philology and lexicography, it does not require concepts to be identified with any single word. Instead, concepts are identified by their semantic field, which includes a range of "characteristic synonyms, antonyms, associated terms, forming a more or less unified part of a vocabulary at a given time".<sup>6</sup> In fact, with this approach, it is possible for someone to possess a concept without possessing any particular word to express it (p. 3).

However, there are differences between Bush's dissertation and the present study. He investigates the concept of freedom itself; he is interested in exploring how a group of leading Arab thinkers conceives of the modern political meaning of *ḥurriyyah* (freedom). In contrast, the current study examines the notion of freedom from both semantic (involving meaning) and lexical (involving terms and expressions) perspectives.

Another important difference is that the current study is a more extended examination of the fundamental vocabularies of human rights, including terms which convey several types and categories of human rights, such as *ḥurriyyah*

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<sup>6</sup> Hampsher-Monk, Tilmans, Karin, and Van Vree, Frank (Eds.) as cited in Bush (2011, p. 3).

*dīniyyah* (religious freedom), *ḥuqūq al-mar'ah* (women's rights), and others. Moreover, although both studies adopt a historical approach to semantics, they examine the attitudes and ideologies of different authors at different periods of time, using different methodologies.

#### **2.1.4. Al-Mirṣafī (1881/2011): *Risālat al-kalim al-thamān* [Letter of eight terms]**

Another significant study examining some vocabularies of human rights is this study, first published in Cairo in 1881.<sup>7</sup> Its significance lies in the fact that it was the first linguistic, as well as political, attempt to investigate eight different Arabic political terms according to their modern understanding, rather than referring to meanings which were compiled in medieval or classical dictionaries. °Abd al-Malik (2011) describes the book as “a study of political semantics which is considered the first of its kind in Egypt” (p. 441). The concepts investigated are: *ummah* (nation), *waṭan* (home), *ḥukūmah* (government), *°adl* (justice), *siyāsah* (politics), *ẓulm* (injustice), *ḥurriyyah* (freedom), and *tarbiyah* (education). For example, he explains that *ummah* (nation) not only is a religious term recorded in Arabic medieval dictionaries (Ibn Manẓūr, 1290/1968c, pp. 23-24), but it also has a far broader meaning; it may be used to refer to any group of people bound together by some tie, whether of language, place, or religion (al-Mirṣafī, 1881/2011, p. 37).

It is worth noting that al-Mirṣafī (d. 1890), an educationalist and historian, does not confine his examination of these eight terms to their linguistic meanings. He also discusses them in terms of the life that people were used to at that time. For instance, he explains that freedom is one of the necessary concepts in people's lives, but this does not mean that people are always free to do as they like. Their freedom is restricted by the rights of others, and he criticises the misunderstanding of some people who understand freedom to mean absolute, unrestricted freedom (al-Mirṣafī, 1881/2011, pp. 87-88). He creates a link between the use of these terms and the prevailing cultural and political circumstances; in this sense, the study can be viewed from three perspectives:

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<sup>7</sup> There is some uncertainty about the original publication date. The editor of the adapted edition of the book, Ziyāda, states that he relied on the first edition of the book, published in 1881 in Cairo by al-Maṭba°ah al-Sharqiyyah (al-Mirṣafī, 1881/2011, p. 8fn 15). °Abd al-Malik (2011), on other hand, mentions that the book was published in 1879 (p. 441).



linguistic, political and reformist/educational. Therefore, al-Mirṣaḥī's study can also be viewed as an attempt to raise people's awareness of the central values that should be adopted in a developing society which is under social as well as political constraints.

To reiterate, it can now safely be argued that human rights vocabularies constitute a wide and rich semantic field that always needs further investigation. This is justified by the idea that the understanding of these terms varies from one age to another and from one author to another. Before examining some of these terms, I will introduce a review of the related literature on the theory of semantic field in Arabic and English lexical semantics.

## **2.2. Previous studies on the theory of semantic field**

This section aims to establish a framework for studies conducted both in Arabic and English on the theory of semantic field. To this end, it introduces a group of studies for which the theory of semantic field constitutes a main concern. These studies have established the theoretical basis of the theory and its position in the field of historical semantics. Some studies which apply the theory of semantic field to various groups of vocabularies (e.g., kinship vocabularies, material culture vocabularies, and daily life vocabularies) are also presented. The ultimate goal is to provide a justification for the viability of the theory in examining the semantic change of a group of human rights vocabularies that carry both semantic and cultural implications.

### **2.2.1. Anīs (1958/1984): *Dalālat al-alfāz* [Semantics of vocabularies]**

This is one of the leading theoretical studies that make a reference to the validity of investigating the vocabularies of human rights using a linguistic approach. Anīs (1958/1984) emphasises the complexity involved in semantics, and he attributes this to the various shades of meaning involved in using a certain expression and the differences in understanding its meaning among different users at different times.

Anīs (1958/1984) also examines what might be described as the interdisciplinarity involved in the study of language due to the strong relationship it has with non-linguistic disciplines such as philosophy, politics, anthropology,

and others. He argues that a genuine linguistic study should not be confined to the study of etymological aspects because that type of study lacks a central dimension, namely, the importance of investigating the external aspects involved in examining language (p. 7). This remark is crucial for two reasons: It directs our attention to the effect of cultural factors on the understanding of a particular expression across several time periods, and it emphasises the argument, commonly postulated in the field of semantics, that semantic studies are interdisciplinary by nature.

It is worth noting that the current research examines the influence of external factors on the use and understanding of human rights vocabularies over different periods of time. ‘External’ factors are the cultural contexts that contribute to understanding a particular expression at a specific point of time; the analysis follows by making a comparison and then tracking the influence of changing cultural circumstances on the change that occurred in the expression over the period under discussion.

Anīs (1958/1984) makes special reference to Bridgman’s approach to empirical examination of the meaning of terms.<sup>8</sup> Anīs argues that unless an empirical investigation is conducted, it will be impossible to determine the meaning of political terms, and that political terms like *diktātūriyyah* (dictatorship), *dīmuqrāṭiyyah* (democracy), and *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) cannot be considered because they will be empty of meaning (p. 9). This seems to support the argument of Izutsu (1959/2000), who emphasises the “scientific investigation” of the meanings while being “primarily empirical or inductive, as little prejudiced as possible by any prepared theoretical position of moral philosophy” (p. 12).

Anīs’s (1958/1984) study also raises the importance of examining the semantic change that occurs in the social and political sphere, since it gives special consideration to both the diachronic and sociopolitical dimensions (i.e., time and place) in which terms are produced and/or expressed (pp. 122-127).

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<sup>8</sup> At this point, Anīs makes a reference to Bridgman (1938).

### **2.2.2. Geeraerts (2010): *Theories of lexical semantics***

This theoretical study introduces different theories and approaches in the field of lexical semantics, including lexical, historical-philological, structuralist, generativist, neo-structuralist, and cognitive. Given the scope of the current research, two of these perspectives are relevant: historical-philological semantics and the structuralist approach.

As mentioned in 2.1.3, the historical-philological approach to lexical semantics is primarily concerned with examining the changes in meaning over different periods of time. The findings of this type of research lie in the classification of the different types of semantic change, including expansion or narrowing of meaning, pejoration, and amelioration involving the emotive meaning.

Structuralist semantics, on other hand, is a “systemic approach in which the mutual relations of meanings with regard to one another constitute the basis of the semantic analysis” (Geeraerts, 2010, p. xiv). This approach places an emphasis on the linguistic relations among the lexical units. Geeraerts (2010) also argues that the theory of semantic field is central to the structuralist approach to lexical semantics.

It must be emphasised that this research combines the two approaches to lexical semantics: diachronic and structuralist. It adopts a synchronic analysis of the vocabularies under discussion at a specific period of time, which provides the material by which a structuralist analysis of the vocabularies of each period can be undertaken. In other words, the synchronic analysis must be done first; its results provide the input to the diachronic analysis, which will examine how the vocabularies change over different periods of time. The structural perspective, in which the terms of freedoms and rights are traced collectively, will also be considered as a unit of vocabularies, rather than individually.

### **2.2.3. Izutsu (1964/2008): *God and man in the Qur’ān*; (1959/2010): *Ethico-religious concepts in the Qur’ān***

These references are significant for two main reasons: Izutsu’s conception of what semantics as a science means, and his conception of how the terms (in his case study, Qur’ānic terms) can be semantically analysed. Regarding the former, Izutsu (1964/2008) looks at semantics as:

an analytic study of the key-terms of a language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual grasp of the *weltanschauung* or world-view of the people who use that language as a tool not only of speaking and thinking, but, more important still, of conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them (p. 3).

Izutsu (1964/2008) strongly argues that a proper semantic analysis of a given term requires that it be analysed not as an autonomous identity but as a member of a “complex and complicated network of conceptual associations” (p. 4). For example, in his examination of the semantic field of *kufr* (disbelief), Izutsu (1959/2010) maintains that a proper semantic analysis of this Qur’ānic term requires investigating the terms that are closely associated with *kufr*, which are: *fisq*, *fujūr*, *ẓulm*, *ʾitidāʾ*, and *isrāf*.<sup>9</sup> In this way, the Qur’ānic term *kufr* is analysed and understood within a structural system of semantically related vocabularies (pp. 156).

In brief, Izutsu (1964/2008, 1959/2010) contends that a proper semantic analysis of a particular term requires an investigation of terms which are semantically related. This argument is essential and can be applied to the current research. For instance, a proper examination of the terms *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) and *ḥaqq* (right), both of which are fundamental terms of human rights, would require an investigation of both expressions in the light of other terms that convey several categories of freedoms and rights. Izutsu further establishes an important link between this approach and what he means by historical linguistics (see 1.3.3. above).

It is clear that both Geeraerts and Izutsu share one central point that is crucial to the current research, namely, the structuralist analysis of the term within its semantic field.

#### **2.2.4. Sawāʿī (2013): *Al-Ḥadāthah wa muṣṭalahāt al-Nahḍah al-ʿArabiyyah fī al-qarn al-tāsīʿ ʿashar: Dirāsah fī mufradāt Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq fī jarīdat Al-Jawāʾib* [Modernity and the terms of Arabic Renaissance in**

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<sup>9</sup> Izutsu (1959/2010) goes into great detail about the meanings of these terms. It is difficult to provide brief English translations of single words, and explaining them here would be beyond the scope of this research.

**the nineteenth century: A study of Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq's vocabularies in *Al-Jawā'ib* newspaper]**

This study by Sawāḥī is one of the applied studies that examine a group of Arabic vocabularies as well as technical terms that express several aspects of civilisation (e.g., institutions, innovations, sciences, and others). The study is mainly concerned with terms used by Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq (d. 1887) in his articles published in *Al-Jawā'ib* newspaper. Al-Shidyāq, a Lebanese linguist, journalist and translator, founded the weekly political newspaper *Al-Jawā'ib* in Istanbul in 1860, which became widely known as articles and texts published in the newspaper contributed to various areas of knowledge as well as debates on issues to do with politics, linguistics, and culture. Contributors to the newspaper included prominent linguists and intellectuals – e.g., Buṭrus al-Bustānī (d. 1883), Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī (d. 1906), Saʿīd al-Shartūnī (d. 1912), and others (Ṭarrāzī, 1914a, pp. 61-64). Ṭarrāzī (1914a) notes that the newspaper “played an important role in the policies of the East” (p.63).

The vocabularies found in the newspaper, argues Sawāḥī (2013), have cultural implications since they reflect new aspects of civilisation that were just emerging in the Arabic language as a result of its cultural interaction with Europe, for instance, through the French campaign to Egypt (1798-1801) and the scholarships to Europe, in addition to other internal factors of modernisation in Arab and Islamic countries. Among the impacts of these experiences was the language involved; new vocabularies appeared and started to be used in the media to express new aspects of civilisation like industries, buildings, and institutions – e.g. *saḥīnah* (ship), *funduq* (hotel), and *jāmiʿah* (university). Some of these vocabularies were coined to describe buildings and institutions encountered by Arabs in Europe, while other expressions were used for the newly established buildings and new objectives in Arab countries (pp. 9-10).

In collecting his data, the author travelled to Tunisia four times between 2001 and 2005 to peruse *Al-Jawā'ib*'s publications in the Department of Periodicals in the National Library of Tunisia (p. 7). He categorises these vocabularies according to the semantic field in which each word is used, although he does not explicitly use the term ‘semantic field’. Applying this theory of semantic field, Sawāḥī (2013) sets out to classify semantically related words in one list. Table 2.1 shows some examples:

The field	Examples of vocabularies included in the list
Journalism	<i>murāsīl</i> (reporter), and <i>jarīdah</i> (newspaper)
Streets and avenues	<i>‘arṣāt</i> (broad roads) and <i>tarbī‘āt</i> (squares)
Food and drinks	<i>maḥāll al-qahwah</i> and <i>qahāwī</i> (cafés)
Hotels	<i>funduq</i> (hotel) and <i>musāfirkhānah</i> (traveller-place)
Transport	<i>qīṭār</i> (train) and <i>‘arabah</i> (vehicle)
Post	<i>ṭābī‘</i> (postage) and <i>tillighrāf</i> (telegraph)
Medicine	<i>māristān</i> (hospital) and <i>kulirā</i> (cholera)
Entertainment	<i>marṣaḥ</i> (theatre) and <i>malhā</i> (cabaret)
Modern industries	<i>safīnah</i> (ship) and <i>ghawwāṣah</i> (submarine)

**Table 2.1: Sawā‘ī’s categorisation of the vocabularies of al-Shidyāq in *Al-Jawā‘ib***

In introducing this semantic study, Sawā‘ī (2013) calls attention to the necessity of a historical Arabic dictionary in line with the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the French *Larousse*, and the German *Duden*. He adds that his study can be regarded as a step toward achieving this goal, or at least as an initial attempt to record and compile one theme of the vocabularies of the nineteenth century, which is a part of what a future Arabic Historical Dictionary could do (pp. 55-57).

**2.2.5. Ḥusām al-Dīn (2001): *Al-Lughah wa al-thaqāfah: Dirāsah anthrū-lughawīyyah li alfāẓ wa ‘alāqāt al-qarābah fī al-thaqāfah al-‘Arabiyyah* [Language and culture: An anthro-linguistic study of kinship vocabularies and relationships in Arabic culture], (2000) *Al-Taḥlīl al-dalālī: Ijra’ātuh wa manāhijuh* [Semantic analysis: Its procedures and its methodologies]**

This study examines the Arabic kinship vocabularies from an anthro-linguistic perspective, in which it examines the linguistic expression in reference to human relations and culture. Ḥusām al-Dīn (2001) strongly argues that in order to identify the meaning involved in kinship terms, the cultural structure of those who use the language must be closely examined; he emphasises the linguistic structure of vocabularies as an expression of the cultural structure (p. 9,13). In this culture-oriented approach to vocabularies, kinship terms are viewed as ‘witness words’ which obviously reflect “conceptual perceptions” that reveal both

“the collective act and the individual’s behaviour of the Arab linguistic community” (p.11). For instance, the term *laqīf*, which literally means ‘picked up’, is used to refer to someone born outside the bounds of marriage. This, in fact, reflects the social behaviour of individuals toward an illegitimate child that is abandoned, perhaps on a road or near a mosque, and then picked up by others who then take care of him.<sup>10</sup> Ḥusām al-Dīn (2001) divides these kinship vocabularies into five main categories as shown in Table 2.2.

The field	Examples of the vocabularies
General concepts of kinship	<i>al-nasab</i> (the relationship) and <i>al-damm</i> (the blood)
Relatives’ groups	<i>al-<sup>c</sup>ashīrah</i> (the close clan) and <i>al-ahl</i> (the close family)
Marriage and divorce relationships	<i>al-ẓihār</i> (when the husband divorces his wife by saying, “You are to me like the back of my mother”, metonymically meaning that he will not approach her)
Forms of marriage	<i>zawāj al-muʿah</i> (temporary marriage limited to a specific period of time)
Kinship	<i>al-umm</i> (mother) and <i>al-dhurriyyah</i> (descendants)

**Table 2.2: Ḥusām al-Dīn’s categorisation of the vocabularies of kinship in Arabic culture**

In another study (2000), Ḥusām al-Dīn examines the vocabularies of the poetry (570–700 CE) of the Hudhayl tribe in describing various aspects of life (i.e., human beings, relations, animals, and nature). The author contends that this provides a record that constitutes a “linguistic treasure” of vocabularies pointing to one aspect of Arab culture at that time which, in turn, helps to establish “dialogue” with that culture” (p. i). In his attempt to present a descriptive analysis of the vocabularies recorded in the poems, Ḥusām al-Dīn categorises these expressions into four basic semantic fields, under which other sub-semantic fields are suggested; these are listed in Table 2.3.

Field	Elements
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<sup>10</sup> This is a hypothetical example to explain the idea.

Humans	Vocabularies of parts of the body, stages of life
Human relationships	Vocabularies of kinship; relatives; large groups of people
Animals, birds, insects	e.g., <i>'ibīl</i> (camel), <i>khayl</i> (horse), <i>ḥamām</i> (doves), <i>naḥl</i> (bees)
Nature	Vocabularies of manifestations and phenomena, e.g., <i>nujūm</i> (stars), <i>samā'</i> (sky), <i>kawākib</i> (planets)

**Table 2.3: Ḥusām al-Dīn's categorisation of the vocabularies of Hudhayl poems**

In line with Izutsu's view, Ḥusām al-Dīn (2000) argues that:

constructing the vocabularies of a text into semantic fields unveils the conceptual structure of the producers of these texts which appears through networks of central and sub-concepts (p. v).

This collectively reflects an entity of experiences as well as the perceptions of the users of these vocabularies; it also reflects significant characteristics of Arab culture at this time (p. v).

In keeping with this view, the examination of the vocabularies of freedoms and rights in the current research aims to have an impact on understanding the conceptual image of people's entitlements, and therefore an understanding of their needs and demands, as well as their stage of liberation. For instance, at one point, the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom) was used to refer to the right to own property; at other times, it expanded to refer to entitlements related to political participation, such as the right to vote and the right to run for office. This expansion of the concept led to additional terms which conveyed different types of political rights, and it also reflected the widening scope of freedom in the society.

### **2.3. Previous studies on the diachronic approach to semantic change**

This section introduces some of the important studies concerning the theory or applications of the diachronic approach to semantics. It includes both theoretical studies, such as that of Allan and Robinson (2012), which examines the most contemporary methods in diachronic semantics, and applied studies (Ayalon,



1985, 1987; Naşr, 1990; Tucker, 1972) that trace the changes which occurred in a group of vocabularies over different points of time. The goal is to highlight the tools adopted in these studies in their treatment of the diachronic approach. This paves the way for investigating the tools adopted in diachronic linguistics in general, and the studies whose main concern is the Arabic vocabularies in particular.

### **2.3.1. Allan and Robinson (2012): *Current methods in historical semantics***

This up-to-date reference presents ten papers selected as proceedings of the fifteenth International Conference of English Historical Linguistics, organised in Munich in 2008. The significance of this book lies in the fact that it closely addresses the sources, approaches, and methodologies adopted in historical linguistics research. The book is divided into three sections, which together present the most recent trends involved in examining the tools of diachronic approach to semantic change: (1) data and sources, (2) corpus-based methods, and (3) theoretical approaches. The first section discusses sources and the process of data collection, the second explores the procedures and technological tools which allow data to be analysed electronically, and the third is concerned with theoretical approaches to the study of meaning, in light of the argument that “lexical meaning cannot be studied in isolation” (p. 9).

Allan and Robinson illustrate the current state of the field by reviewing other studies, including that of Lyons (1995), who notes that the field of semantics is widely seen as an autonomous branch of knowledge that is remarkably undervalued, and that its relationship to other branches of knowledge is regarded as weak (as cited in Allan & Robinson, 2012, p. 2). It is also worth noting, argue Allan and Robinson, that the dominant approach in the last thirty years of research in lexical semantics has mainly been synchronic, not diachronic. This indicates the need to initiate further research in this regard, but there are many difficulties which make it a demanding goal (p. 2). Allan and Robinson review some of these challenges and quote Durkin as saying that examining the issue of semantic change involves classifying types of semantic changes into certain sets, and this task is complicated because it is not predictable. Also, the historical semanticist must establish a theoretical framework within which the historical approach to lexical semantics is adopted,

and this demands an examination of external, non-linguistic factors (pp. 2-3). For example, Cruse argues that a proper examination of the semantic change of a given expression over different periods of time requires examining the differences in the cultural background and environments surrounding each linguistic usage. This, he adds, is a difficult task because cultural contexts differ from one place to another and from one time to another (p. 3).

This discussion is crucial to the current research as it raises awareness of the need to establish a procedure for selecting and collecting the data, and to devise a methodological framework for properly analysing the data.

### **2.3.2. Tucker (1972): *Enthusiasm: A study in semantic change***

This study adopts a diachronic approach to examine the semantic change which occurred in the use of a set of words – namely, ‘enthusiasm’ and its derivatives: ‘enthusiast’, ‘enthusiastic’ and ‘enthusiastical’ – in a group of texts from roughly the 1600s to the 1900s.

Tucker first highlights the motivations behind the study by pointing out that it is interesting to investigate semantic change occurring to a set of words which are extant. This, she says, helps modern readers to recognise that their understanding of the abstract term and its derivatives is remarkably different from its previous senses at different periods of time (p. vii).

In her treatment of the changes of meaning that occurred with these words, Tucker consults texts on religion, poetry and politics, written at different times, in different situations, by different writers. She is mainly concerned with the flow of ideas, along with the different views attached to the use of the words over different historical periods and in different texts. Her main argument is that evaluating the semantic changes associated with the use of these expressions requires an examination of the historical, as well as the textual, contexts in which they were used.

Tucker finds that the term also had other connotations not recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and she carefully investigates the meanings as they were conveyed in a group of other political, religious, and literary texts. She records the meanings of the term as used in these texts, in addition to the

connotative meaning involving the emotional associations connected to the use of the terms.

This careful investigation provides a record which inductively derives the actual use of a set of words following the arguments mentioned earlier, namely that the actual meaning of terms requires an investigation of the term in use. This type of inductive analysis helps to trace the history of the word as well as to grasp the history of the ideas involved.

**2.3.3. Naşr (1990): *Al-Taşawwur al-qawmī al-‘Arabī fī fikr Jamāl ‘Abd al-Nāşir (1952-1970): Dirāsah fī ‘ilm al-mufradāt wa al-dalālah* [The Arab national conception in Jamāl ‘Abd al-Nāşir’s thought: A study in lexical semantics]**

This study examines the evolution of the discourse of former Egyptian president Jamāl ‘Abd al-Nāşir (d. 1970) at different points of time during the period between 1952 and 1970. The writer adopts a discourse analysis approach, with particular reference to the theory of semantic field. In this respect, the study can be seen as an examination of ‘Abd al-Nāşir’s ideology in light of the terms he used during this period. It is an interdisciplinary study, which can be located in both lexical semantics and political sociology (pp. 15-16).

The author, Naşr, is mainly motivated by the “central and dominant position” of ‘Abd al-Nāşir’s political discourse in the political and cultural life of Egypt, as well as other Arab countries, between 1952 and 1970 (p. 13). During this period, his speeches were broadcast on radio, and his writings (e.g., *Falasfat al-thawrah* [Philosophy of Revolution] and *al-Mithāq al-waṭanī* [The National Charter]) were published in a number of political brochures and books. Furthermore, the regard for ‘Abd al-Nāşir as “a charismatic leader who very soon became the hero of the Arab national liberation” (p. 15) has resulted in widespread diffusion of his political ideas. Thus, it is not surprising to note that his political discourse constitutes most of the political vocabulary used during this period. The ultimate goal of her study, explains Naşr, is to trace the ideological shifts in ‘Abd al-Nāşir’s political discourse at different points of time, in reference to changing political events, through an examination of the vocabularies he used in each period (p. 74).

A linguistic methodology oriented to semantic field is adopted. In the author's view, this methodology successfully matches the aim of the research because analysing the network of national vocabularies in his political discourse significantly helps to understand the construction of Jamāl °Abd al-Nāṣir's national thoughts. Another reason for adopting the theory of semantic field, Naṣr notes, is the large number of texts under consideration in the study, which makes it difficult to adopt other methodologies (pp. 43-46).

The data consulted in this study is a representative sample of fifteen national concepts, collected from eighteen texts of Jamāl °Abd al-Nāṣir, including public speeches delivered on important political occasions (e.g., the declaration of the United Arab Republic, uniting Egypt and Syria, in 1958, or the military defeat in the Six-Day War of June 1967), and those which he delivered to commemorate national days (e.g., Labour Day, or the anniversary of the July Revolution), in addition to the three texts written by him , which were mentioned above. Naṣr periodised the timescale of the study (1952-1970) at six points of time, based on significant historical as well as political events (e.g., the 1956 triple aggression on Egypt, or the 1961 separation between Egypt and Syria). A synchronic study was applied to the vocabularies used in each period, and then the author traced the semantic change across these points in time (pp. 65-74).

In her treatment of the vocabularies, Naṣr (1990) categorises the nationalist vocabularies of °Abd al-Nāṣir into three central semantic fields as shown below.

The field	Examples of the vocabularies
Arab national vocabularies	<i>al-jamāhīr al-ʿArabiyyah</i> (Arab masses), <i>shakhṣiyyatunā al-ʿArabiyyah</i> (our Arab personality)
Egyptian national vocabularies	<i>al-waṭan</i> (home); <i>al-shaʿb</i> (peoples); <i>al-waṭaniyyah al-Miṣriyyah</i> (Egyptian nationality); <i>al-thawrah al-waṭaniyyah</i> (national revolution)
Central Arab national concepts	<i>al-ummah al-ʿArabiyyah</i> (Arab nation), <i>al-qawmiyyah al-ʿArabiyyah</i> (Arab nationalism), and <i>al-wiḥdah al-ʿArabiyyah</i> (Arab unity)

**Table 2.4: Naṣr's categorisation of the national vocabularies in Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's discourse**

As previously noted, the writer adopts a diachronic approach to Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's political discourse. In her view, this is a "relatively new" trend in Arab academic research (p. 118), and its tools of analysis are not easy to identify; therefore, Arabic studies which adopt this approach are rare. Surprisingly, Naṣr's comment still applies to modern Arabic academic research, since very few diachronic Arabic studies are apparent in the literature. The current study is an attempt to fill this gap, but with particular reference to the field of human rights.

This, in fact, sheds light on the significance of studying political terms in the period under consideration in this current research (1869-1952). This period witnessed the emergence of Arab political vocabularies that were significantly expanded at later periods of time, and this suggests a gap that needs to be filled by a linguistic study which uses a diachronic structural approach on the language of this period.

**2.3.4. Ayalon (1985): *Semantics and the modern history of non-European societies: Arab 'republics' as a case study*; (1987): *Language and change in the Arab Middle East: The evolution of modern Arabic political discourse***

In both of these studies, Ayalon emphasises the semantic approach to history; he explains that the main goal is to trace, over time, Arabic political

vocabularies in order “to identify the basic contours and main principles of the change, leaving ample room for further exploration” ( Ayalon, 1987, p. 11).

He postulates that history and semantics are two integrated fields of knowledge that cannot be disconnected, and that in his view, lexical semantics is central to historical inquiries (Ayalon, 1985, pp. 821-822). Following Koebner, Ayalon endorses a semantic approach to history, or as Koebner explains, a “study of the career of political and historical expressions and slogans” (as cited in Ayalon, 1985, p. 821) over different points of time. This is crucial both for disambiguating these expressions and for gaining a better understanding of the cultural/political phenomenon at these times. Ayalon, whose interests lie in the Arab world, emphasises that linguistic (i.e., lexical and semantic) change should be looked upon both as a direct result of the cultural developments in Middle Eastern societies, and as a reflection of the strong desire of Arab intellectuals to transfer modern Western ideas and concepts to their own societies; as a result, Arabic underwent significant semantic change (Ayalon, 1987, pp. 4-5). To substantiate this argument, he traces the semantic changes that have occurred in the understanding of certain political words across different historical periods.

In the 1985 study (which is included later in the 1987 book), Ayalon specifically considers the idea of ‘Republic’. Since this term was not originally part of Middle Eastern vocabularies, Ayalon examines how the notion was understood by Arabs when they discovered it, how they understood the concept over different periods before they started to use the term for their states, and what concept this term conveyed when referring to Arab states.

He examines how the notion of ‘European Republics’ was conveyed in the writings of medieval Arab intellectuals by using Arabic terms such as *madīnah* (city). Ottoman writers seemed to have more knowledge of this notion, as a result of their cultural and political interactions with Europeans. With the French military campaign to some Middle Eastern countries in 1798, the French found it difficult to communicate the idea of their republic; consequently, they presented it as either *mashyakha* (sheikhdom) or *jumhūr* (the masses). In 1918, in the Libyan city of Misurata, the word *jumhūriyyah* (republic) was used in its modern sense for the first time, to convey the meaning of an independent country. The ‘Tripolitanian Republic’ had recently been liberated from Italian occupation and

had established an elected a consultative assembly. In 1953, the ‘Republic of Egypt’ was established after a military coup ended the monarchy, but the name ‘Republic’ referred to what was nothing more than the typical un-democratic regime of developing countries; it did not reflect the European sense of the term. In 1976, Libya’s ruler, al-Qadhdhāfī, declared the *jamāhīriyyah* of Libya,<sup>11</sup> using a term that is, argues Ayalon (1985), “no doubt a genuine creation, an original name for a new brand of government hitherto unknown” (p. 834).

Ayalon’s 1987 study is an expansion of his 1985 study. It focuses on the vocabularies of politics in the writing of Lebanese and Egyptian writers in the nineteenth century. He categorises the political vocabularies as shown in Table 2.5.

The field	Examples of the vocabularies
Religious communities and nation-states	<i>millah</i> (religion), <i>tā’ifah</i> (sect), <i>ummah</i> (nation), <i>qabīlah</i> (tribe)
Sultans, kings and emperors	<i>sultan</i> (king/monarch), <i>khalīfah</i> (successor), <i>malik</i> (king), <i>‘imbrāṭūr</i> (emperor)
Subjects and citizens	<i>ra‘iyyah</i> (subjects), <i>ahālī</i> (people) <i>muwāṭinūn</i> (citizens)
The traditional standards of seniority of the sociopolitical elite	<i>khāṣṣah</i> (privileged), <i>dhawāt</i> (possessors), <i>aṣḥāb</i> (owners)
The elected leaders of sociopolitical elite	<i>rusul</i> (messengers), <i>wukalā’</i> (representatives), <i>nuwwāb</i> (members)
Constitutions, law, and legislation	<i>al-ḥukm</i> (ruling), <i>al-qānūn</i> (law), <i>al-dustūr</i> (constitution)
Governments, autocratic and otherwise	<i>jumhūriyyah</i> (republic)
Parliaments and parties	<i>nā’ib</i> (member of the parliament), <i>murashshah</i> (candidate), <i>majlis al-sha‘b</i> (parliament)

**Table 2.5: Ayalon’s categorisation of the political vocabularies in the Middle East in the nineteenth century**

<sup>11</sup> The complete name was the Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Ayalon (1987) describes the stages of the linguistic change taking place gradually in political vocabularies over time:

[1] initial unawareness; [2] early piecemeal lexical experimentation; [3] intensified but still unorganized innovation; and [4] the beginning of orderly adjustment (p. 9).

An example of the semantic change, says Ayalon (1987), is the change in the understanding of the term *ummah* (nation), which was initially used to refer to the “Muslim community, united by one faith and sharing one mission” (p. 22). At a later stage, when Napoleon Bonaparte spoke to the Egyptians, he described them as *al-umma al-Miṣriyyah* (the Egyptian nation), in accordance with the French Orientalist understanding of the term ‘nation’, meaning any group of people, not only Muslims (pp. 22-23).

Although these two studies look at different vocabularies, they use the same diachronic approach to demonstrate that linguistic studies play a crucial role in understanding the political, historical and cultural aspects of a society.

In conclusion, the previous studies presented above serve as a guide for the current research to analyse another significant field of vocabularies – i.e., the field of human rights. In light of the findings above, the present research argues for the viability of the theory of semantic field and the diachronic approach to lexical semantics, by tracing the semantic change in the vocabularies used in the field of human rights over different points of time. Adopting the theory of semantic field and the diachronic approach requires exploring the tools and procedures used in both approaches, and this will be the main subject of the following chapter.





## CHAPTER THREE

### A Historical Overview of Liberation in Egypt, with Reference to Vocabularies of Freedoms and Rights

#### 3.0. Introduction

This chapter provides background information about the history of liberation in Egypt over the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century; this is necessary in order to understand the relationship between the geopolitical context and the changes in the vocabularies of freedoms and rights. In other words, an understanding of the non-linguistic aspects of the environment is needed to comprehend the factors that have a potential influence at both the conceptual level (i.e., changes that involve ideas and perceptions of freedoms and rights), and the linguistic level (i.e., changes in terms and expressions of freedoms and rights). As Kramsch (1998) explains, for linguistic terms to retain their whole meaning, they must be situated in their social and historical context of use (pp. 21-22) (see Section 1.3.1). Therefore, this chapter presents an overview of the main historical and political events that occurred in the period under consideration, including:

- ❖ The cultural renaissance in Egypt that ushered in the era of Khedive Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha (d. 1848), who is considered the founder of modern Egypt. This period was described by Anṭūn al-Jumayyil – a linguist, journalist, and politician – as “the initial steps of Egypt toward liberation, as well as the era [which saw the products] of the writers and scholars who began this transition” (as cited in al-Shayyāl, 1951/2000b, p. xv). Among these was Rifāʿah al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, the intellectual figure and political writer, whose texts are consulted as the first attestation of the use of vocabularies of freedoms and rights in Arabic political writings.
- ❖ The ʿUrābī Revolution (1879-1882), which started as a military revolt and then expanded to become a public revolution supported by people of various classes; it aimed to destabilise the power of Khedive Tawfīq Pasha (r. 1879-1892) and bring an end to British occupation. It influenced a broad range of political spheres and institutions, and it

brought about the establishment of a new parliament, constitution, and constitutional government. These events had an impact on other changes that were widely discussed and reflected in the writings of the political and intellectual figures of this period, especially since a number of them were actively involved; one was Muḥammad ʿAbduh, whose texts are consulted in the second period of the diachronic investigation of the vocabularies.

- ❖ The Revolution of 1919, which was carried out by Egyptians against the British occupation. It resulted in institutional changes and developments at the political and social levels, to the extent that the Egyptian historian ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Rāfiʿī (1946/1987f) described it as being the premise on which the country was developed over the subsequent three decades (p. 15).
- ❖ The Revolution of July 1952, the military coup in which a group of Egyptian officers, supported by the people and by political parties representing all classes and points of view, rose up against King Fārūq (r. 1936-1952); this ended the monarchy, and Egypt was declared a republic in 1953. The current investigation will take this as the last revolution of the selected time scale.

Considering these events helps us to recognise and appreciate the roles and positions of the selected writers and the context of their writing; it justifies the selection of the data and clarifies how this data is representative of its period. Examples from political texts, including books, newspaper articles, and political statements are reviewed.

The chapter begins with a historical prologue that aims to shed light on the social and political situation in Egypt at the beginning of the nineteenth century, with reference to the language of the vocabularies of freedom; it describes the political events and records the emergence of the Arabic term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom). This is followed by an overview of the three historical events chosen as stopping points in the diachronic investigation of the vocabularies.

It also discusses the evolution that occurred in the written Arabic language in each period, along with how these changes promoted the emergence and

development of the vocabularies being considered. The data sources relevant to political vocabularies are also highlighted for each period.

### 3.1. Historical introduction: Egypt at the beginning of the nineteenth century

From about the fifth to the fourteenth centuries AH (the eleventh to nineteenth centuries CE), Muslim Arab countries went through a phase of decline known as *ʿuṣūr al-inḥiṭāṭ* (The Ages of Decadence). This period of intellectual darkness affected their economies, cultures and politics (al-Wadghīrī, 2013, p. 27; cf. al-Jābirī, 2009).<sup>12</sup>

During the nineteenth century, Egypt, under the Ottoman Empire, was isolated and disconnected from much of the outside world, particularly Europe (al-Shayyāl, 1951/2000b, p. xv). This situation had a very strong effect on the Arabic literary language (*fuṣḥā*), which suffered from rigidity and decline in terms of both learning and usage, since it was neither used nor learned as the main language of the nation.<sup>13</sup> Its style had become rigid, and its vocabularies did not develop during this period (al-Wadghīrī, 2013, p. 27). In the words of Newman (2013):

Arabic – like its speakers – was suffering under the Turkish yoke and had long since ceased to be the language of government or, indeed, high culture, retaining importance only as the language of religion (p. 473).

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<sup>12</sup> The characterisation of this era as a period of decline is supported by well-established arguments of al-Wadghīrī (2013), al-Jābirī (2009), and Newman (2013), but others argue that in fact, the period witnessed intellectual productivity and activeness. The issue is always open to further investigation and debate.

<sup>13</sup> According to Badawī (1973), five varieties of Modern Arabic can be recognised in Egypt. Two of these are related to *fuṣḥā* (literary Arabic), while the others are of *al-ʿāmiyyah* (colloquial). Due to the boundaries of this research, it is mainly concerned with these two types of *fuṣḥā* (literary Arabic):

*fuṣḥā al-turāth*: the Classical literary Arabic, which is relatively unaffected by other varieties; its main standard is the language of the Qurʾān (i.e., Qurʾānic Arabic and pre-Islam poetry); it is used by Azharite religious scholars.

*fuṣḥā al-ʿaṣr*: known as ‘Modern Standard Arabic’, it is remarkably affected by the modern age and has become the means of expression in formal speeches, seminars, conferences, workshops, and cultural gatherings; it is often used in media language and in political commentaries and is ordinarily written (p. 89-90).

Newman (2013) goes on to discuss how Classical Arabic in written texts of the time was rarely completely accurate and error-free because many authors did not have the skills needed to use it appropriately. Most people were illiterate and conversed in colloquial Arabic, while scholars and researchers in the field of traditional Islamic sciences used Classical Arabic.

Egypt's isolation was shattered by Napoleon Bonaparte's colonialist military campaign in Egypt (1798-1801). He was accompanied by a scientific expedition consisting of a group of scientists and scholars of several disciplines including: mathematics, natural sciences, politics, economics, arts and literature. Ayalon (1987) describes this significant event, explaining how Europe – an area of the world that used to be regarded by Arab countries as arid or irrelevant – had brought its civilisation, political concepts, technical innovations and developments, and repressive armies to the region (pp. 3-4). To understand the impact of this interaction on the Arabic language, as well as on the spirit of the times, it is necessary to consider these related historical events.

### 3.1.1. Napoleon Bonaparte's campaign<sup>14</sup>

As described by Hourani (1970), “the ideas of the French Revolution came embodied in a European Army” (p. 49). Bonaparte disembarked in Egypt on 1 July 1798 and soon distributed a declaration which was “translated (badly) into Arabic” (Newman, 2013, p. 472; al-Rāfiʿī, 1928/1987d, p. 88fn 26). It introduced to Egyptians, for the first time, the use of the term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) to convey the modern meaning of ‘political freedom’, rather than the traditional classical meaning, which was simply the opposite of being enslaved (Newman, 2013, p. 437):

The Arabic translation of the declaration mentions the term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom).

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، لا إله إلا الله، لا ولد له، ولا شريك له في ملكه. من طرف الفرنسيين  
المبني على أساس الحرية والتسوية.

(al-Rāfiʿī, 1928/1987d, pp. 88)

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<sup>14</sup> The historical information in Sections 3.1.1. and 3.1.2. is mainly taken from al-Rāfiʿī (1928/1987d; 1930/1989a) unless noted otherwise.

“In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; there is no god but God, He has no offspring and no partner”.

This proclamation, it declared, was issued by the French Government, which was “built on the basis of freedom and equality” (Hourani, 1970, p. 49).

The term *ḥaqq* (right) is found in a subsequent statement of the Arabic proclamation:

وقولوا للمفترين إنني ما قَدِمْتُ إليكم إلا لأُخَلِّصَ حَقَّكُمْ من يد الظالمين  
(al-Rāfiʿī, 1928/1987d, pp. 88)

Say to the slanderers that I have come to rescue you[r right] from the hands of the oppressors (Hourani, 1970, p. 50).

The problematic translation of the declaration into Arabic indicates two important points. Firstly, at the conceptual level, the text attests to the emergence of previously unknown political ideas and concepts as a result of the interaction between East and West. After being introduced here, these new ideas gradually developed in the society and in Egyptian political thought.

Secondly, at the linguistic level, the emergence of these new ideas necessarily resulted in changes to native expressions. Ayalon (1987) explains that Arabic was “inadequate for transmitting ideas that were alien and largely unintelligible to the region’s society” (p. 4). This, in fact, justifies the importance of including nineteenth century Egypt when studying the vocabularies of freedoms and rights. It was a time of cultural and political events that contributed to the emergence of new political ideas, and these led to the development of the language of freedoms and rights in Arabic. At the centre of these changes, which have had an impact throughout the Arab world, was Egypt.

### **3.1.2. Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha: Founder of modern Egypt**

One of the results of Napoleon’s campaign was that Egyptians received a great cultural shock when they came into direct contact with a Western civilisation and its associated power and technology (al-Shayyāl, 1951/2000b, p. xvi).

The French campaign faced strong resistance; in fact, it was a significant factor in the formation of the Egyptian national identity in the nineteenth century. After the French left the country (in 1801), the power of the Egyptian public grew, as people began to take their rightful places in public life and to gain prominence. This led to the appointment of Muḥammad ʿAlī, an Albanian officer in the Ottoman army, as the Wālī of Egypt; he eventually became its absolute ruler (in 1805) and the founder of modern Egypt.

As the new ruler, Muḥammad ʿAlī was eager to build a modern and powerful country. In order to fulfil this ambition, he carried out a strategy of reform on multiple levels. Much of this depended on acquiring modern ‘European’ sciences, which were part of the legacy of the French campaign, so he established modern schools for training the military and for other professions such as medicine, engineering, and agriculture. To train qualified people to work in these schools and in other newly-established modern institutions, he sent many scholarly missions to European countries, among them Italy (1809), France (1826-1831), and England (1848) (al-Shayyāl, 1951/2000b).

The mission sent to Paris in 1826 was described as the largest and most important one up to that point, given the influence that these scholars had when they returned to Egypt after experiencing European civilisation and culture. This impact was reflected in the renaissance of cultural life.

#### **- Rifāʿah al-Ṭaḥṭāwī<sup>15</sup>**

One of the members of this mission to Paris was Rifāʿah al-Ṭaḥṭāwī. A cleric with a traditional religious education from al-Azhar, he was considered to be “perhaps the most precious product of these missions” for being, according to ʿAmārah (2009), the first critical and wise Arab observer of the new world (p. 141). By acquiring first-hand knowledge of French culture and civilisation, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī contributed significantly to the cultural life of modern Egypt, as well as to Egyptian and Arab thought. He returned home to become one of the leading

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<sup>15</sup> The main sources on al-Ṭaḥṭāwī are (Majdī, 1958; al-Shayyāl, 1970; 1951/2000b, pp. 120-146; ʿAmārah, 2009; Newman, 2011, pp. 31-97).

figures of the cultural transformation in Egypt and of the Arabic intellectual renaissance.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī joined the mission when his teacher at al-Azhar, Sheikh Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār (d. 1835) – an Azharite scholar who had visited Bonaparte’s scientific institutes in Egypt twenty years earlier, interacting with European scholars and scientists there – appointed him to accompany the mission in a religious role. Although al-Ṭaḥṭāwī had joined the mission to be an imām, not a student, his ambition and enthusiasm for knowledge led to his being accepted as one of the few students specialising in translation.

During his five years in Paris (1826-1831), al-Ṭaḥṭāwī read widely in many areas, including history, philosophy, law, and politics. He also read the writings of leading French intellectuals such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. Moreover, he witnessed a number of significant historical political events, particularly the protests against the king that broke out in 1830.

The combination of directly experiencing French society and being raised in an Azharite background impacted his thoughts significantly. He admired, but at the same time, criticised various aspects of French civilisation. In his writings, he sought to maintain a balance between the Islamic values he learned at al-Azhar and the knowledge of modern science that he gained in France. For example, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī had originally studied the Islamic ideas of justice, and then he saw these values applied in real life by the constitution and the political regime in France. He attempted to create new theoretical ideas and views on freedoms and rights by synthesizing Islamic values and Western practices to produce a modified version of Western concepts, tailored for an Arab society.

In terms of linguistics, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī wrote in a language that represented a transitional stage between Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic. Two aspects can clearly be observed in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s writings: the use of new expressions to express new concepts or things, and the use of previously used words in new senses (Newman, 2013, p. 475).

Sawaie (2000) investigates several strategies adopted by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī to introduce new usage of words to reflect other senses:



- Arabisation, i.e., adopting words from other languages and converting them to use Arabic pronunciation, spelling, and structure; his examples include *akādīmiyyah* (académie) and *Ahl al-Jurnāl* (editors or journalists);
- Using existing Arabic words to convey new meanings, such as *al-mutawallī* to mean ruler and *al-irsāliyyah* to refer to the mission or the missionary;
- Incorporating commonly used, and perhaps informal, words and phrases, like *jarāyḥī* to refer to surgeon (pp. 402-405).

This obviously reflects the significant role that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī played in the gradual shift from the use of Classical Arabic to Modern Standard Arabic, a shift which represents a distinctive feature of the period under discussion. These conceptual, as well as linguistic, contributions are present in writings of his which are consulted in this research.

While in Paris, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī compiled an account of his stay in the country, in a book entitled *Takhlīṣ al-ibrīz fī talkhīṣ Bārīz*, [The extract of pure gold in the abstract on Paris], first published in 1834. In it, he closely examines and describes several aspects of cultural, social, and political life in French society. He devotes a full chapter to the most important political event that he witnessed: the Revolution of 1830, going into its causes, its media coverage, and the resulting political changes. He provides a detailed description of the political organisation of the French state, and he translates the French Charter of 1814.<sup>16</sup> He discusses the “Rights accorded to the French people” by the Charter (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1834/2011, p. 198), and expresses his admiration for these laws, stating that this “wonderful government system can serve as an example to those wishing to learn from it” (p. 193).

In his translation of Article 4 of The Charter, he uses the word *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) as an equivalent for the French term *liberté*:

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<sup>16</sup> Although al-Ṭaḥṭāwī in his texts did not state which French Charter he was translating into Arabic, Newman – in his English translation of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s texts – refers to the French constitutional charter of 4 June 1814 (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 2011, p. 198fn 4).

المادة الرابعة: ذات كل واحد منهم يستقل بها، ويضمن لها حريتها، فلا يتعرض له إنسان إلا ببعض حقوق مذكورة في الشريعة، وبالصورة المعينة التي يطلبه بها الحاكم.<sup>17</sup>

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 118)

Article 4: Each of them is free, and their freedom is guaranteed. No-one can be interfered with except in accordance with some right laid down in the law, in the form prescribed by it and as requested by the ruler (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 118).

This was the first time in Arabic writings that the term *ḥurriyyah* was expressed to convey the modern meaning of freedom. The term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) became a main concept in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's later books, which reflect his political views and theories as well as the European influence on his political thoughts. In *Al-Murshid al-amīn fī tarbiyat al-banāt wa al-banīn* [The honest guide to educating girls and boys], first published in 1873, he has a chapter discussing the concept of *ḥurriyyah*, which he explains as representing the ability to act in the society and to carry out lawful tasks without any prohibitions or restrictions. He considered freedom a milestone of a developed and civilised state (p. 199fn 2). This is indeed a remarkable semantic change in the use of the word *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) in Arabic (see 5.2.1).

In the same chapter, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī also provides a categorisation of types of freedoms. He coins expressions for each of these and explains their meanings as follows: *ḥurriyyah ṭabʿiyyah* (instinctive freedom), *ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah* (behavioural freedom), *ḥurriyyah dīniyyah* (religious freedom), *ḥurriyyah madaniyyah* (civil freedom), and *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom).

In another book, *Manāḥij al-albāb al-Miṣriyyah fī mabāḥij al-ādāb al-ʿaṣriyyah* [Egyptian approaches to the pleasures of contemporary arts], first published in 1869, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1869/2010a) devotes the concluding chapter to a discussion of the rights and duties of several classes of society, such as *ḥuqūq wulāt al-ʿamr* (the rulers' rights); *ḥuqūq al-raʿiyyah* (the subjects' rights); *ḥuqūq ʿumūmiyyah* (public rights); and *ḥuqūq khuṣūṣiyyah shakhṣiyyah* (private personal rights).

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<sup>17</sup> Since this text is a translation of French text, and the term reflects the French concept, it was not included in the selected data concerned with Egyptian writings.

It was al-Ṭahṭāwī who introduced into Arab political thought the concepts of freedom in their modern sense. Tracing and illustrating these new meanings that al-Ṭahṭāwī communicated is the focus of later discussion and analysis.

### **3.1.3. The ʿUrābī Revolution<sup>18</sup>**

The ʿUrābī Revolution began in 1879 and reached its peak in 1881. The region had been suffering from corruption and financial despair as a result of weak governance. In June 1879, the British and French removed Khedive Ismāʿīl Pasha (r. 1863-1879) from power and replaced him with his son, Tawfīq Pasha. The policies of Ismāʿīl Pasha had led to huge debts, and the subsequent wide-scale financial ruin brought foreign interference in the affairs of the country at several levels. Financially, the French and the British imposed control, and the Public Debt Commission, an international committee made up of representatives from European creditor countries, was established to ensure that the debts were repaid. Egypt's economic institutions (factories, banks, and contracting companies) and investments were dominated by Europeans; they also controlled the public civil sector, in which they held key positions.

Ordinary Egyptians, on the other hand, were suffering. Labourers were flogged and brutally mistreated by government officers, and they were required to pay huge taxes from which they did not benefit in the least; in fact, all the tax revenue went to pay off the creditors. Not only that, but freedom was lacking, political opposition was persecuted by the government, and the newspapers were under government control and sometimes banned for publishing opposition opinions. At the same time, as a result of the cultural and educational renaissance that had begun in the time of Muḥammad ʿAlī, there was a developing awareness among the Egyptian public of the ideas of nationalism and liberation.

Against this background rose another prominent figure: Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1897). A philosopher, political activist, and Islamic reformer, he was described as an intellectual and credited with the development of political thought in Egypt. Al-Afghānī, who visited Cairo for the first time in 1869, and

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<sup>18</sup> The main sources for the historical events in this section are al-Rāfiʿī, (1937/1983a, 1932/1987a, 1932/1987b).

lived there between 1871 and 1879, began to advocate political reform. He established the first Egyptian national political party, *al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī al-Ḥurr* (The Free National Party), an undeclared party that worked secretly to overthrow Khedive Ismāʿīl, and he called for the liberation of the country from both the rule of dictators and foreign interference.

Al-Afghānī's ideas spread among the educated elite, and among those influenced by them were Muḥammad ʿAbduh (d. 1905) and Aḥmad ʿUrābī (d. 1911). ʿAbduh, an advocate of a modernising Islamic ideology, was seen by ʿAmārah (1993) as one of the three leading figures in the reform and renaissance of the East – along with al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and al-Afghānī (p. 13). ʿAbduh communicated with and accompanied Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī during his stay in Cairo. Ghalyūn (1987) describes the influence of al-Afghānī on ʿAbduh's thought as unique, claiming that "nothing resembled it" (p. 40). ʿAbduh, who became a strong believer in al-Afghānī's political thoughts and ideas, was initially involved in political life, although as an educationalist with a Ṣūfī orientation, he tended towards isolation, avoiding political life and public engagements. However, he later contributed to spreading the ideas of al-Afghānī among his colleagues and friends in al-Azhar (Ghalyūn, 1987, p. 40).

ʿAbduh believed that until people were sufficiently educated and qualified to participate in political life and claim their due rights, there should be an impartial and fair absolute ruler, rather than a constitutional governor, as the basis for political reform. He called for political reform through education and by spreading awareness of freedoms and rights, stating that this would enable people to understand their value and thus lead to gradual change in institutions and society. This was seen as a developmental process rather than a political revolution, which might have led to a sudden change. He believed that the educated and enlightened class were the only group qualified to take part in social and political life and reform (ʿAmārah, 2009, 48-52).

When ʿUrābī, an Egyptian national officer, led a group of other officers in a military revolt against Turco-Circassian control, with its prejudice and unfairness against Egyptian officers, the original aim was to establish their rights. The rebellion expanded, though, gaining the support of people of all classes.

Intellectuals, farmers and labourers became involved, and it ended up as a national political revolution against both foreign domination and absolute rule.

Despite his beliefs concerning the educationalist orientation of social reform, °Abduh joined °Urābī's revolution and soon became one of its spokespersons, in a move described as a "significant intellectual and practical transition" (°Amārah, 1993, p. 54). Observing how Egyptians of all walks of life supported the military revolt, in which they called for a political revolution and demanded an elected government and parliament, he recognised the power of the public and watched how the government responded to popular demands. His initial ideas changed, and this transformation is reflected in his language. This will be seen in °Abduh's political articles published in the newspaper *Al-Waqā'ir Al-Miṣriyyah* [The Egyptian Gazette], which will be consulted as a source of data later in this research.

*Al-Waqā'ir*, Egypt's oldest newspaper, was founded by Muḥammad °Alī in 1828 to publish official news and governmental declarations and statements. When °Abduh became its editor in October 1881, he expanded its scope to include literature as well as social and political articles (°Abduh, 1982, pp. 50-51; Ṭarrāzī, 1914a, pp. 49-50). In *Al-Waqā'ir*, °Abduh published a series of political articles between 1880 and 1882, in which he expressed his views on the political participation of different classes, the law and constitution, and freedoms and rights.

As a social reformer, he used to appreciate the role the elite deserved to play in political life and their entitlement to enjoy political rights. Later, as a political activist and speaker for the revolution, as well as a writer and politician, he discussed and commented on Articles of the Constitution, defending people's rights. Due to his status, his political writings, published in *Al-Waqā'ir*, are of special importance for this research because they mark the development of publicly available ideas on freedoms and rights. At the linguistic level, °Abduh was concerned with improving and 'reforming the Arabic language'; thus he could be seen as a linguistic as well as a social reformer.

°Abduh was strongly motivated by the need to enable the language to convey new ideas and concepts. To implement his linguistic view, he attempted to avoid the traditional style of writing and move toward clearer and simpler

language in his own writing (Ghalyūn, 1987, p. 51-52). In his political articles, he introduced new political terms and expressions and then explained and clarified their meanings.

Because he played a part in introducing and identifying a vocabulary of political concepts – many of which related to freedom and rights – to the general Arab reader at this early period, his articles provide a linguistic justification for his inclusion in this study.

#### **3.1.4. The Revolution of 1919<sup>19</sup>**

Although the ʿUrābī Revolution initially succeeded in achieving the people’s demands to change political institutions (e.g., an elected government and parliament), it was not ultimately successful. The revolution was eventually suppressed, and it ended with the British occupation of the country in 1882.

Despite the failure to achieve its ultimate goals, the ʿUrābī Revolution is significant because it was one of the earliest liberation movements in the East, aiming to overthrow an absolute ruler and establish a constitutional political system, as well as to resist foreign occupation. It contributed to the spread and development of ideas of nationalism and liberation among people of all classes, and it achieved some level of participation in political life. This experience and awareness led to dissatisfaction with the British occupation and a widespread yearning for freedom and liberation. Furthermore, the causes of the Revolution of 1919 resembled those of the ʿUrābī Revolution in that they both were reactions against foreign domination of politics and economics in the country.

Under British occupation, Egyptians suffered from discriminatory political and financial systems that limited their rights and gave the advantage to the occupiers. The high echelons in the government, military, and trade sectors were monopolised by the British. The military government (1914-1918) declared martial law and imposed their rule; this resulted in censorship of the press, arrests without trial, millions of Egyptian workers pressed into working for the military government, and various other unjust practices. This state of affairs infuriated the people and served as one of the triggers of the rebellion.

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<sup>19</sup> The historical information in this section is mainly taken from al-Rāfiʿī (1947/1987c, 1946/1987f, 1949/1988, 1951/1989b).

Nevertheless, the political realm made plans to govern themselves, since the public was eager for the system of elected government that they had been promised by the British in 1918 after their demands for independence. The Revolution of 1919 broke out when Sa<sup>c</sup>d Zaghlūl (d. 1927) – the Egyptian nationalist political leader who was a follower of <sup>c</sup>Urābī and who participated in his revolution – and two of his comrades met the British governor in Egypt to demand that he leave immediately. Instead, the three men were detained and sent into exile in Malta. The revolution became a nationwide protest and then a national political revolution by Egyptians who, although they came from different social classes and held different political beliefs, came together to oppose the British occupation. In 1922, after two years of struggle, Britain dissolved the protectorate and recognised the independence of Egypt, and a new constitution was written one year later. Foreign domination remained, though.

Otherwise, the revolution resulted in institutional changes and political and social developments. A constitutional system of government was established, where power was legitimated in a nationally elected – and theoretically accountable – parliament. At the social level, the revolution encouraged various classes of people to become involved in public life and in political activities; women, for example, joined protests, spoke up for their rights, established societies, and published their writings. Labour movements promoted a growing awareness of workers' rights and acted to bring about better working conditions, with newly-established unions demanding their rights.

All these changes had an impact in the public sphere, including in the field of journalism. Social and political activists, writers, intellectuals, politicians, and lawyers debated the new laws and constitutions, demanding that they specify different types of rights. Many of these individuals published opinion pieces in the newspaper, hoping to persuade policy makers to call for rights and freedoms. These demands were reflected in new conceptions of rights and freedoms, such as women's rights, labour rights, and political rights for individuals.

At the linguistic level, these social and political changes had an impact on a group of terms and expressions to do with several types of freedoms and rights

which are central to this research. These terms are discussed and analysed in the following chapters.

### 3.1.5. Journalism

Journalism could indeed be seen as a faithful mirror not only of the political and social atmosphere in a society but also of the language (ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 2002). Similarly, Smith and Higgins (2013) describe journalism as not just a main source of information but as “the very oxygen of public life” (p. 1). They maintain that the task of journalists is not merely to search for events and stories but to construct an account of them as well.

Narrowing his discussion to the impact of journalism in modern Egypt, the Egyptian historian al-Shayyāl (1958/2000a) considers journalism as one of the main sources of historiography that influenced the writing of the modern history of Egypt (pp. 203-204). It served to provoke the ruling powers by raising public awareness, and by doing so, it became a driving force for liberation movements such as revolutions.

#### - *Al-Ahrām newspaper as a historical and linguistic document*<sup>20</sup>

*Al-Ahrām* newspaper is considered to be one of the most influential newspapers in Egypt. A number of leading Arab journalists, as well as historians, valued the role of *Al-Ahrām*, which Ṭarrāzī (1914b) describes as being “at the forefront of all Egyptian newspapers of that period [1869-1892]” (p. 5). He mentions that *Al-Ahrām*, given its position as the oldest surviving Arab political newspaper in the world, has been described as “the school of journalists” (p. 50). Similarly, Marwah (1961) praises *Al-Ahrām* and calls it the first Arab newspaper to contribute to the evolution and development of Arab journalism and to act as a counterpart to Western newspapers of the time (p. 194).

*Al-Ahrām* was first published on Saturday, 5 August 1876, as a weekly newspaper, and on 3 January 1881, it became a daily newspaper. On 15 July 1876, the founders of the newspaper – the Lebanese brothers Salīm (d. 1892) and Bishārah Taqlā (d. 1901) – published *Mithāl Jarīdat Al-Ahrām* [A sample

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<sup>20</sup> The main sources of information for this section are taken from (ʿAbduh, 1951; Ṭarrāzī, 1914b; Ḥamzah, 1985).



issue of *Al-Ahrām* newspaper] to introduce and advertise it. In the issue's editorial, Salīm Taqlā argues that newspapers function as "the mouthpiece of the nations" (as cited in ʿAbduh, 1951, p. 27). This description closely reflects the newspaper's pioneering role in spreading knowledge, communicating events, and promoting writing in different fields of knowledge, including agriculture, religion, science, culture, literature, commerce, etc.

At first, the newspaper was devoted to these other fields because the founders were committed to avoiding politics. However, because of accelerated political events, such as the Russo-Turkish war (1877-1878); European interference in Egyptian affairs, the deposing of Khedive Ismāʿīl (1879), the recognition of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and the spread of his political ideas, and a revival of Egyptian interest in getting rid of foreign occupiers, the newspaper soon added politics as one of its main areas of interests. *Al-Ahrām* played a central role in society, prompting Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1951) to describe it as *dīwān al-ḥayāt al-muʿāṣirah* (the record of contemporary life) in Egypt. Rizq (1995) provides reasons justifying this description of *Al-Ahrām* as "the record of the contemporary life" (pp. 3-9); these include:

Continuity and long history: *Al-Ahrām* is the oldest newspaper in Egypt. It has been published against a political background spanning different historical periods including the Ottoman state, the British conquest, the years of national independence, and the three main revolutions considered in this research (in 1882, 1919, and 1952). These changing circumstances would have been enough to eliminate most newspapers.

Variety of writers: Nearly every significant Egyptian writer has contributed to *Al-Ahrām*; these include politicians, intellectuals, artists and poets, religious figures, and leading journalists. The list includes Aḥmad Shawqī (poet), Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal (politician), Muṣṭafā Luṭfī al-Manfalūtī (man of letters and philosopher), Nabawiyyah Mūsā (feminist activist), and ʿAbbās Maḥmūd al-ʿAqqād (intellectual and political writer), to mention only a few. This diversity has considerably enhanced the crucial role that the newspaper has always played in promoting different fields of knowledge. Thus, it could be argued that *Al-Ahrām* had truly depicted the literary, intellectual, political and social reality for seventy-five years and, accordingly, has also embodied the

transitions experienced on many levels during this period (Ḥusayn, 1951). It is worth noting here that the current research does not aim to examine the language of the newspaper itself; instead, it analyses representative articles written by some Egyptian writers during this period. The goal is to trace the semantic development of human rights vocabularies as used and understood by these writers.

In addition to those points put forward by Rizq (1995), there are other reasons for the importance of *Al-Ahrām* as a linguistic document, including:

Language in actual use: The newspaper articles reflect the written language in use at any particular time. °Abd al-°Azīz (2002) asserts that journalism has played a central role in the changes which the Arabic language has experienced over different points of time. Modern Standard Arabic, he adds, is the medium currently used in contemporary newspapers, due to its simplicity and ease; this is the variety of written Arabic that people nowadays use and understand. In addition, the language used in the daily newspapers is dynamic, addressing different strata of the society and various intellectual levels. In this sense, these articles constitute good evidence for the current research, given that its objective is to trace the development of language from a diachronic perspective.

Newspapers are a vehicle for delivering messages to the masses: As a vehicle of popular culture, it is the media (primarily newspapers at that time) that serves not only to convey ideas but also to disperse them widely. Newspapers can be passed around in coffee houses and other public spaces, and they are available to nearly everyone, even those who are quite poor. In the case of *Al-Ahrām* in Egypt in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries, the newspaper was important because it embodied the message of freedom in some sense and allowed it to be widely shared (unlike today, when the media, because of its own fragmentation, provides fragmented and niche analyses).

Availability of articles/texts: *Al-Ahrām* has always been widely available. The Microfilm Centre, established in the early 1960s, maintains archives of all issues since the newspaper was established, and all of these publications can be accessed. This is indeed one of the assets that distinguish *Al-Ahrām* newspaper from all the others.

### 3.1.6. The July Revolution of 1952<sup>21</sup>

On 23 July 1952, a group of Egyptian army officers known as *al-Ḍubbāṭ al-Aḥrār* [the Free Officers] led a military coup supported by people of all classes and political parties. Their objective was to overthrow King Fārūq (r. 1936-1952) and end the British occupation. With the ousting of King Fārūq, the last ruler of the Muḥammad ʿAlī dynasty, the monarchy was ended, and Egypt was declared a Republic on 18 June 1953. Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, one of the leaders of the revolution, soon took over the presidency of the Republic after the first president, Muḥammad Najīb (r. 1953-1954), was put under house arrest.

ʿAbd al-Nāṣir (r. 1956-1970) formed and led a nationalist, anti-imperialist movement which represented a significant change in Arab political discourse. For reasons relevant to the boundaries of this research, the year of this revolution, 1952, is considered an end point for the investigation. Among these reasons is the consistency of the data, in that the research is confined to investigating the vocabularies of freedoms and rights over periods that share similar political features; as such, the focus is on the period of the monarchy under the Muḥammad ʿAlī dynasty. Beginning with the ʿAbd al-Nāṣir regime, Egypt witnessed a radical political transition, which has had a huge impact on other areas such as social life, economics, the media and language. All of these factors and their associated changes are reflected in the language. For example, nationalism is a key concept in the period after 1952. Because of this different focus, the years of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir’s regime deserve to be analysed and studied separately, with attention paid to the vocabularies of nationalism, as Naṣr (1990) has done (see Section 11.3 ).

The procedures by which the data were collected, selected, categorised, and distributed along the timescale under consideration, as well as the method of analysis, will be the main concerns of the next chapter.

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<sup>21</sup> The source of historical events in this section is mainly al-Rāfiʿī (1959/1989c) unless noted otherwise.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Research Methodology

#### **4.0. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the methodology that was adopted in order to arrive at answers to the research questions set out in Chapter One. The aim of this discussion is twofold; the first section examines how the corpus was established in terms of data collection, selection, and categorisation, while the second section establishes the methodology adopted in the analysis of the data.

#### **4.1. The corpus**

In Chapter One, it was noted that the historical approach to semantics, which was adopted in this research, involves an empirical examination of the vocabularies under consideration. This examination requires consulting relevant texts from a specific historical period to track changes in meanings over time, according to how writers used the terms. Before beginning this research, a systematic procedure for collecting and using the corpus must be developed and applied.

Collecting the corpus is one means of inquiry into the field of diachronic semantics. Trask (1999) defines corpus as “a body of spoken or written texts in a language which is available for analyses” (p. 60). Similarly, McEnery and Wilson (2011) define the term as a collection of texts on which a target-oriented process of linguistic analysis is undertaken (p. 29). Svensén (2009) agrees and makes the point that in linguistics, the term ‘corpus’ is used to communicate two types of meanings: old and modern. The former refers to “a (complete) collection of (as to origin, content, etc.) interrelated texts” (p. 43). The modern meaning is connected with the process by which a certain collection of linguistic material is selected according to specific criteria and viewed as the source of a target-oriented linguistic inquiry (Svensén, 2009). The corpus is crucial for the study of semantics since it “can provide detailed empirical evidence” for the

behaviour of vocabularies (Stubbs, 2007, p. 127). This type of corpus should be 'representative' – i.e., it should include a 'representative sample' from an assortment of selected data "which provides us with as accurate a picture as possible of the tendencies of that variety" (McEnery & Wilson, 2011, p. 30), so as to be able to reach conclusions about the linguistic behaviour of the phenomenon and to generalise these findings (McEnery & Hardie, 2012, pp. 8-11; Rundblad, 2015, p. 1; cf. Stubbs, 2005, pp. 220-226).

The current research has established an Arabic corpus which represents the vocabularies (i.e., terms and expressions) of freedoms and rights used in Egyptian political writings during the period between 1869 and 1952, with the goal of tracing the semantic changes involved. In looking for a suitable corpus to use for this study, I found that none existed, so it was necessary to create a new one. None of the currently available Arabic corpora provides the type of data required to address the research gaps highlighted above or to answer the questions that the research sets out to answer.<sup>22</sup>

Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998) argue that "designing a diachronic corpus can be even more complicated than a synchronic corpus" because the researcher must consider not only size and representation of variation, but also the "parameter of time that must be adequately represented" (p. 251). In order to meet these challenges and establish a representative corpus, a number of procedures pertaining to the model of periodisation, sources of data, data collection procedures, and selection criteria were established.

#### **4.1.1. The periodisation of data**

The issue of periodisation has to do with the chronological division of the data, and the model of periodisation adopted may vary among researchers who adopt diachronic approaches. Some divide the data according to a neutral model by using time units, such as years, decades, or centuries, as stopping points, whereas others choose significant historical events or political regimes as starting and/or stopping points. In addition, there are process-oriented models that use historical or physiological cycles, depending on the subject, such as

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<sup>22</sup> For surveys on available Arabic corpora, see (al-Sulaiti, 2010; Zaghoulani, 2014).

those involving life cycles (Orr, 2005). Ultimately, the decision rests with the researcher.

In her study of Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir’s discourse, Naṣr (1990) provides a unique example of a researcher using her judgement. She creates a combined model of periodisation that considers both the historical and political events that occurred in a specific period (e.g., the triple aggression on Egypt in 1956, the break up in 1961 of the political union between Egypt and Syria, and the military defeat in the Six Day War of June 1967) and the different policies that ʿAbd al-Nāṣir adopted during this time (e.g., concerning Arab unity in 1953 and Arab cooperation over Palestine in 1963-1966). These historical and political events, states Naṣr (1990), had an impact on the policies that ʿAbd al-Nāṣir adopted at different stages (pp. 65-74), but she admits that this periodisation, “like all periodisation models, is still not completely satisfactory or free from points of disagreement” (p. 69) (see 2.3.3).

I have chosen to periodise the data of this research according to political events, in particular, the revolutions of the time. By definition, political revolutions that have widespread public support are motivated by people’s needs for human rights and freedoms, and these demands have significant repercussions on the social and cultural life of the country. Language – like other aspects of the society – is affected, just as language itself is an agent of change. Texts are expected to reflect within them words depicting human rights and calls for freedom, and parallel to the events occurring in society, the meanings of these words will change over time.

There are four stopping points in the current study:

- 1) Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s texts – published between 1869 and 1973 – which include the first appearance of the term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom), as well as other terms for freedoms and rights, in the modern sense.
- 2) The ʿUrābī Revolution between 1879 and 1882; it reached its peak in 1881.
- 3) The Revolution of 1919.
- 4) The revolution of July 1952.

The data are organised chronologically, as shown in Table 4.1, and then divided into three sub-corpora that are similarly organised; each corpus deals with the data of one period.

Number	Period	Years
First	Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings	1869-1873
Second	From the °Urābī Revolution until prior to 1919	1879-1918
Third	From the Revolution of 1919 until the end of 1952	1919-1952

**Table 4.1: The three sub-corpora created in this research**

#### 4.1.2. Sources of data

The data were collected from three main sources:<sup>23</sup>

- Texts from Rifā°ah al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's complete works, published between 1869 and 1873. All these works are published in a five-volume book entitled *Al-A°māl al-kāmilah li Rifā°ah Rāfi° al-Ṭaḥṭāwī* [The complete works of Rifā°ah Rāfi° al-Ṭaḥṭāwī], ed. Muḥammad °Amārah, Cairo, 2010 (see al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1869/2010a, 1873/2010b).
- Political articles written by Muḥammad °Abduh and published in *Al-Waqā'if Al-Miṣriyyah* newspaper between 1880 and 1882. These articles are found in the first volume of a five-volume set entitled *Al-A°māl al-kāmilah li al-imām al-shaykh Muḥammad °Abduh* [The complete works of Muḥammad °Abduh], ed. Muḥammad °Amārah, Cairo, 1993 (see °Abduh, 1993). Also see the practical limitations mentioned in 4.1.3.3 below.
- Political articles from a variety of writers published in *Al-Ahrām* from the date of the first issue, 5 August 1876, through the end of 1952.

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<sup>23</sup> Note that these three sources do not correspond exactly to the three time periods covered in this thesis.

#### 4.1.3. Procedures of data collection

The data were not available in an electronic format which would allow searching, nor were they accessible online, so the collection process had to be undertaken manually.

The political articles published in the newspaper *Al-Ahrām* are available on microfilm from *Al-Ahrām* Foundation's Microfilm Centre, which includes archives of *Al-Ahrām* from the first issue on 5 August 1876 up to the present time. Hence, the archival work was conducted in person in Cairo between 15 June and 2 July 2012, and again between 20 and 29 June 2013.<sup>24</sup> During the Cairo visits, the time was spent browsing articles and identifying relevant data; after closer inspection of the articles, more than one thousand pages of the newspaper were collected. Back in England and Kuwait, the data from these pages were selected according to the criteria listed below. The process of collecting the articles involved the following procedures.

##### **4.1.3.1 *Al-Ahrām* index: [Kashshāf *Al-Ahrām*]**

Issues of the newspaper published from 1 January 1892 through the end of 1952 were indexed according to year and ordered alphabetically according to subject and/or names of the contributors. The index included the names of contributors along with the individual titles of their articles.

In order to identify a representative sample of Egyptian political writings, it was necessary to identify those who made important contributions to Egyptian society in the period under consideration, and who wrote articles in *Al-Ahrām* related to freedoms and rights. Four Egyptian academics were consulted for suggestions about the prominent figures in the given period; they were: Muḥammad ʿAmārah, an intellectual figure of Islamic moderniser ideology; Saʿad Maṣlūḥ, a professor of Arabic linguistics at Kuwait University; ʿImād Abū Ghazāl, a human rights activist and professor of Archival Studies at the

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<sup>24</sup> Both times, the data collection was cut short due to the political situation in Cairo. The first trip coincided with the second and final stage of presidential elections, held on 16 and 17 June 2012, while the second stage of fieldwork coincided with large protests against President Mūrsī on 30 June 2013. The largest of these protests took place relatively close to the *Al-Ahrām* Foundation, and the huge demonstrations and congestion of traffic and people made it difficult to access the Microfilm Centre.



University of Cairo, former Minister of Culture and former secretary general of the Supreme Council of Culture in Cairo; and Muḥammad al-Jawādī, a historian and member of the Academy of Arabic Language in Cairo, the Supreme Council of Journalism, and the National Council of Human Rights.

References in biographical books were also searched to find Egyptian figures who were described as influencers in political, social, and cultural life in modern Egypt between the nineteenth century and the revolution of 23 July 1952. Among these books was an encyclopaedia al-Muṭṭī (1997) entitled *Hādhā al-rajul min Miṣr* [This Man is from Egypt], which contains biographies of ninety Egyptian figures who contributed to different aspects of Egyptian life. A list of names was drawn up and then narrowed down to those who had written in *Al-Ahrām*. Table 4.2 lists the twenty-five writers who were identified in the full index of their articles in *Al-Ahrām*.

No.	Writers	Orientation
1	Muṣṭafā Kāmil (d. 1904)	Politician, nationalist activist
2	Muḥammad °Abduh (d. 1905)	Islamic intellectual
3	Qāsim Amīn (1908)	Islamic modernist intellectual and social reformer
4	Aḥmad °Urābī (d. 1911)	Revolutionary leader
5	Malak Ḥanafī Nāṣif (d. 1918)	Feminist
6	Amīn al-Rāfi° (d.1927)	Lawyer, nationalist and politician
7	Sa°d Zaghlūl (d. 1927)	Nationalist, revolutionist and statesman
8	Aḥmad Zakī (d. 1934)	Islamic scholar in Arab and Islamic studies, translator, and archaeologist
9	Maḥmūd °Abbās al°Aqqād (d. 1946)	Writer, intellectual and politician
10	Hudā Sha°rāwī (d. 1947)	Nationalist and feminist
11	Nabawiyya Mūsā (d. 1951)	Feminist and social activist
12	Aḥmad Amīn (d. 1954)	Islamic moderniser writer

13	Maḥmūd °Azmī (d. 1954)	Political and journalist
14	Muḥammad Ḥusain Haykal (d. 1956)	Writer and politician
15	Salāmah Mūsā (d. 1958)	Socialist, intellectual
16	Ismā°īl Maẓhar (d. 1962)	Liberal intellectual
17	Muḥammad Tawfīq Diyāb (d. 1963)	Nationalist, activist and journalist
18	Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid (d. 1963)	Liberal, philosopher, political
19	Ḥāfīẓ °Afīfī (d. 1964)	Politician, minister and ambassador
20	Muṣṭafā al-Naḥḥās (d. 1965)	Political figure, Prime Minister
21	Munīrah Thābit (d. 1967)	Politician, lawyer and feminist
22	Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (d. 1973)	Writer and intellectual
23	°Azīz Mīrhim	Politician and democratic activist
24	Fikrī Abāẓa (d. 1979)	Writer and lawyer
25	°Ā'shah °Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 1998)	Academic researcher of Islamic studies, social activist and journalist

**Table 4.2: Contributors to *Al-Ahrām* whose full set of articles (published between 1892 and 1952) I browsed**

The relevant articles were ordered from *Al-Ahrām* Microfilm Centre, where they scanned each article to a PDF or TIF (i.e., image file) and saved them to a CD. From the articles retrieved, more than one thousand were saved for further selection.

#### **4.1.3.2. *Al-Ahrām* Foundation books**

Articles published before 1892 were not included in the index, but *Al-Ahrām* Foundation has published books that offer important information about significant articles from that early period which discuss major issues in Arab and Egyptian society. These articles cover different topics – including politics, economics, sociology, religion, literature, arts and science – that were addressed by leading figures. Among these books are:

- *Shuhūd al-ʿaṣr: Al-Ahrām 110 maqālāt wa 110 aʿwām: 1876-1986* [Witnesses of the era, *Al-Ahrām* 110 articles and 110 years: 1876-1986].

This sample of articles, selected from “more than 36,000 issues of *al-Ahrām*... of three million pages”, is described in the introduction to the book as “a representative sample” of the articles that “truly represents Egyptian and Arab thought” (*Markaz Al-Ahrām lil-Tarjamah wa al-nashr*, 1986, p. 8).

Among the 110 articles, only two were published prior to 1892. Although these two articles are written by leading Egyptian revolutionary figures Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Aḥmad ʿUrābī,<sup>25</sup> neither one includes vocabularies having to do with freedoms and rights or any related topic.

- A series of *Al-Ahrām* books entitled *Al-Ahrām: Dīwān al-ḥayāt al-muʿāṣirah* [*Al-Ahrām: The record of contemporary life*], written by Yūnān Labīb Rizq (see Rizq, 1995).

They include a survey of the main subjects and issues discussed in the newspaper between 1876 and 1934, as well as a list of significant contributors and information about important articles and where to find them. Each volume includes an index of subjects and names. Sixteen volumes of the series were accessible in the library of *Al-Ahrām* Foundation; three of these volumes concerned the period prior to 1892, but no relevant articles were found.<sup>26</sup>

#### **4.1.3.3. Random selection procedure**

In addition to the search procedures above, issues of *Al-Ahrām* were randomly selected in the following manner:

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<sup>25</sup> ʿAbduh’s article introduces the importance of *Al-Ahrām* newspaper, while ʿUrābī’s article introduces the role of charity societies in the society. Neither were relevant to this research.

<sup>26</sup> Muḥammad ʿAbduh published a series of twelve articles in *Al-Ahrām* between 1876 and 1877; they were mainly concerned with education, which was his main area of concern at that time (Rizq, 1995, pp. 55-61). I browsed the full twelve issues, but the other articles published in those issues were not relevant to the topic of freedoms and rights either.

The full issues of *Al-Ahrām* from 1880 to 1950 were ordered, requesting issues from every fifth year (e.g., 1880, 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1905, etc. – fifteen issues in total). This strategy was adopted because the newspaper's first issue of the decade or mid-decade might be expected to include reviews or surveys of main events from the previous year, as well as articles discussing the nation's concerns and aspirations for the future.

The microfilms from the years between 1876 and 1891 were browsed in a random manner. The issues of each year are on one or sometimes two rolls of films in the *Al-Ahrām* Microfilm Centre. Three films from each five-year period were randomly selected and reviewed.

A full index of twenty-five of the writers in *Al-Ahrām* (those listed in Table 4.2) was requested. Each page of the index included three columns, and if these pages suggested other articles that might be related to the topic, those articles were also ordered.

For any particular article, the full page of the newspaper was received as a PDF or TIF file saved to a CD. Some of these pages contained additional articles related to the topic of freedoms and rights.

Before proceeding to the next section, which addresses procedures that applied to selected data, the conceptual limitations involved in the data collection must be addressed.

#### **– Practical limitations**

Many of the articles published in *Al-Ahrām* prior to 1892 (which have not been covered in the *Al-Ahrām* index) were by non-Egyptian writers. *Al-Ahrām* itself was founded by two Lebanese journalists, the Taqlā brothers, and the first generation of its editors were not Egyptian either; this reflects the Lebanese influence on the newspaper in the early period (Rizq, 2001, pp. 99-100; Ṭarrāzī, 1914b, pp. 51-53). Within the scope of this research, only one genre of texts is considered: political texts, especially newspaper articles, written by members of an educated Egyptian elite (including intellectuals, reformers, authors, activists, politicians, and others). Only Egyptian writers were considered because they were more likely to be involved in the sociopolitical context constructed through the language of the period. Also, to maintain consistency, consulting other Arab

writers would have meant having to establish a representative sample of those writers, which was not practical due to limitations of time and otherwise, although it might be usefully undertaken in future research.

Other practical limitations involved in the data collection included: (1) the unavailability of the data in electronic form, which prevented searching for the relevant vocabularies; and (2) self-funding of the data collection expenses. There were, in fact, other reasons for limitations on the availability of data. One was that political articles were not an important feature of the newspaper in the 1870s and 1880s, when it consisted primarily of editorials, foreign and local news reports, readers' letters, announcements and commercial news.

Many of the articles of that period are not primarily concerned with the issue of human rights, and they do not always include the relevant terms on freedoms and rights. This absence may be an indication of the main cultural and national concerns of the society at that time, and the relevant articles enable understanding of the changing direction of ideas and concerns.

To fill the gap in the availability of relevant articles in *Al-Ahrām* in this early period, the decision was taken to consult another source, namely, Muḥammad ʿAbduh's political articles published in *Al-Waqāʾiʿ Al-Miṣriyyah* newspaper between 1880 and 1882.

#### **4.1.4. The selection of the data**

Two types of terms were examined:

- 1) terms and expressions that convey several types and categories of freedoms to which people are entitled; these are defined by expressions collocated with the term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom), such as *ḥurriyyah shakhṣiyyah* (personal freedom), *ḥurriyyah dīniyyah* (religious freedom), *ḥurriyyat al-mar'ah* (women's freedom), and so on;
- 2) terms and expressions that convey several types and categories of rights to which people are entitled; these are defined by expressions collocated with the term *ḥaqq* (right) or *ḥuqūq* (rights), such as *ḥuqūq madaniyyah* (civil rights), *ḥuqūq siyāsiyyah* (political rights), *ḥuqūq al-raʿiyyah* (subject's rights), and others.

After a total of 1,063 collected pages of *Al-Ahrām* newspaper were reviewed, the articles that included these terms were selected. Those were then narrowed down to texts using a semantic perspective. In other words, the texts chosen had “strategic importance for the method of semantic analysis.” In the view of (Izutsu, 1959/2010), “There are, roughly speaking, seven cases in which any passage clearly assumes a strategic importance for the method of semantic analysis” (p. 37); texts are considered significant when the surrounding words contribute to understanding the meaning of the term under consideration. These cases occur when:

- 1) the passage includes an explicit explanation or definition of the term’s meaning;
- 2) the passage includes synonyms for the term under examination – i.e., “words or expressions that have the same meanings in some or all contexts” (O’Grady, 1996, p. 269);
- 3) the passage includes an opposite or contrasting meaning of the word under consideration;
- 4) the word is defined by its negative meaning;
- 5) the semantic field can be employed in the analysis of the meaning;
- 6) the rhetorical device of parallelism can be employed in understanding the meaning of a word; and
- 7) the orientation of the meaning intended by the usage of the term is beneficial to analysis of the meaning (e.g., some terms are used with religious or non-religious implications, and it helps to know this) (Izutsu, 1959/2010, pp. 37-41).

It should be noted that the current research does not adopt Izutsu’s (1959/2010) approach in its entirety; it has been modified to produce an approach more suitable for the political texts and the requirements of the research. According to this modified approach, the texts considered are those that are of ‘strategic importance’ and that contribute to understanding the meaning of the term. This approach includes the following situations:

- (1) The text provides a direct explanation of the term under consideration. For example, in some cases, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī provides a definition of the terms of rights and freedoms.
- (2) The text provides as examples types of actions or entitlements that constitute a particular type of freedom or right. For instance, the writer may provide examples of the kind of action that falls under a type of freedom discussed in the text.
- (3) The text includes associated words that have nearly the same meaning as the main word under consideration in a particular context. Many texts include a pair of words that are usually or regularly used together in the same context. To examine this semantic relationship, we can exchange the two words in the same paragraph and context; if they both convey almost the same meaning, then we can describe these two words as synonyms (Izutsu, 1959/2010, p. 37). An example is the two terms: *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) and *istiqlāl al-tāmm* (complete independence). In some cases, if these two terms can be used to convey the same meaning, this indicates that the meaning of freedom – in this particular context – is a state liberated from dependence.
- (4) The negative meaning of the word is presented. Some writers may define the word by a negative meaning, by determining semantic features that are not included in the meaning of the term. One clear example is this definition provided for the term *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) in classical dictionaries: “*khilāf al-riqq*” (opposite of enslavement) (Maḥrūs & Sulaymān, 2000b, pp. 218; Ibn Manẓūr, 1290/1968a, p. 177). This suggests that freedom is the antithesis of slavery; thus we understand what freedom means and what it cannot mean. This type of definition provides an insight into some aspects of the word’s meanings (Izutsu, 1959/2010, p. 39).

## **4.2. The method and application of semantic analysis**

This section discusses the methods applied in the analysis of the terms and expressions of freedoms and rights and provides an explanation of the principles of semantic analysis.

As mentioned earlier, a central part of the diachronic method is tracing the changes that have occurred not only in the individual terms (of freedoms and rights) at different points in time, but also in the whole pattern of vocabularies. Therefore it is important to apply a twofold model of analysis that includes analysis of the meanings of the individual terms, and analysis of semantic fields of freedoms and rights. This allows the identification of the vocabularies that are used in the texts of each period, the mapping of the types of entitlements to which these vocabularies refer, and the tracing of the manner of change of these terms and the entitlements to which they refer, in the interest of determining the world view of the notion of freedoms and rights over this historical period.

### **4.2.1. The analysis of individual terms**

The semantic analysis of a term's meaning requires an investigation of what the term actually refers to, based on a description of its semantic features. This can be achieved by examining "any 'quality' or 'component part' of an element which may serve as the basis for describing regular patterns" (Hartmann & Stork, 1973, p. 83). This procedure is considered suitable for analysing the meanings of individual terms (Geeraerts, 2010, pp. 70-80; Nida, 1979, pp. 32-34; Ullmann, 1973, pp. 34-39).

In the case of vocabularies of freedoms and rights, which mainly involve practices and actions to which people are entitled, these 'entitlements' serve as semantic features. To determine the meaning of a term involving freedoms or rights, we must determine the entitlements implied by the term. For example, the term *ḥuqūq al-mar'ah* (women's rights) in texts published in the 1900s may refer to education, work and being unveiled, whereas the same term in texts of the 1920s may refer to political rights such as the right to vote and to stand for election. This change in the range of entitlements, in fact, reflects a change in meaning (see Sections 7.2.4 and 9.2.7).



#### ***4.2.1.1. Model of the analysis of individual terms***

To establish an appropriate method for semantic analysis of the individual terms, the following procedures, inspired by the methodology of Agius (1984), are followed:

- 1) a citation (in Arabic) and translation of the paragraph that includes the term;
- 2) an analysis of the linguistic (semantic) and cultural context, so as to identify and understand how the term was actually used; and
- 3) a discussion of the term to determine the range of entitlements of each type of freedom, to allow tracing of the changes that accrue to the meanings in later stages (p. 188).

##### Citation and translation of the paragraph that contains the term

The intended meaning of terms freedoms and rights is not always apparent (or explained directly) in the texts, although al-Ṭaḥṭāwī provides some insight by using examples. On the other hand, the articles in *Al-Ahrām* and *Al-Waqā'if*, because of their journalistic style, are less helpful because the focus is on discussing current issues rather than on definitions or theoretical explanations of meanings.

Therefore, analysing the texts requires a method for uncovering what the term actually is meant to refer to, with as few as possible assumptions based on our present understanding of the term's meaning (Izutsu, 1959/2000, p. 12). This dissertation cites the original Arabic text first, then provides an English translation, and finally discusses the original text. This sequence enables the English-speaking reader to understand the discussion, but it should be noted that the translation may not fully reflect the meaning, and that, in fact, the analysis of the original text occurs before it can even be translated.

##### The linguistic context and the cultural context

Context is a central concept in linguistic analysis, since "the nature of word-meaning is such that quite often it cannot even be properly conceived, let alone defined, without the support of the context" (Ullmann, 1951, p. 62). In linguistics,

there are two types of context; the linguistic context (of a written text) refers to the conjunction of words or expressions surrounding a certain lexical item, while the cultural context refers to “non-verbal elements of the situation, and the wider influence of social setting and cultural background” (p. 61). In this sense, is involved “features of the external world” (Hartmann & Stork, 1973, p. 52).

As Izutsu (1959/2010) states, the linguistic context is of “a strategic importance” for the semantic analysis, as is the cultural context, in order to attain “the full understanding” of the meaning (Ullmann, 1951, p. 61). In explaining Firth’s “Theory of Meaning”, Lyons (1966) points out that we must consider not only the surrounding words but also the norms of the society and the role the writer plays; this may involve his or her personal traits, activities, profession, or memberships in social or political institutions. he further states that “these features are not of course ‘given’ in the data, but must be ‘abstracted’ from it by a careful study of the contrasts that hold between utterances in the same or different contexts of situation” (p. 289).

For example, when Muḥammad ʿAbduh refers to labourers’ rights, his use of the term *ḥuqūq al-ʿamal* (the right to work) cannot be understood without understanding what types of professions and jobs existed in his time, the existing laws regulating work, and so on. This is important because the entitlements that he has in mind are likely to be different from what we think of today.

The approach adopted is to analyse the cultural context by identifying the events that the term in question refers to. This involves taking into account:

- the cultural features that influence the writer’s views, such as his economic status, religious background, and life experiences; and
- the significant events during that period, as well as political and social circumstances involved in the production of the text.

#### Discussion of the term

After the citation of the term and an analysis of how it is used in the text, its meaning is discussed as follows:

The semantic features of the term are determined by identifying the types of actions and entitlements associated with it. For example, what types of action were referred to by the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (which may be translated as ‘political freedom’, but does not actually refer to our current understanding of that term)? Using another example, *ḥuqūq al-mar’ah* (women’s rights), we see that the semantic meaning changes according to the text and time period; Table 4.3 shows hypothetical examples of its meaning at different points in time.

Period	Meaning
First	The term does not exist or is not mentioned.
Second	The right to educate and learn; the right to unveil.
Third	The right to vote and stand for election; the right to initiate divorce.

**Table 4.3: Simplified example of the change in the meaning of the term *ḥuqūq al-mar’ah* at different points in time<sup>27</sup>**

Another example, illustrated in Table 4.4, is the change in the meaning of the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah*, which does not always refer to ‘political freedom’ although we translate it that way now.

Period	Meaning
First	The right of individuals to personal ownership of their properties.
Second	The right of the educated male elite to vote and express political opinions.
Third	The right of males and females, educated or not, to vote, stand for election, and engage in other political practices.

**Table 4.4: Simplified example of the change in the meaning of the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* at different points in time<sup>28</sup>**

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<sup>27</sup> Actual examples of the entitlements referred to by the term over the periods of time can be found in Sections 7.2.4, 8.1.4, 9.2.7, 10.1.5.

<sup>28</sup> Actual examples of the entitlements referred to by the term over the periods of time can be found in Sections 5.2.7, 6.1.7, 7.2.5, 8.1.5, 9.2.8, 10.1.6.

#### ***4.2.1.2. Types of semantic change involving individual words***

When comparing the meaning conveyed by a term over different time periods, different aspects of semantic change can be examined (ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, 1995, pp. 194-200; Anīs, 1984, pp. 152-167; Geeraerts, 2010, pp. 25-41; Murray, 1996, pp. 344-346; Riemer, 2010, p. 372-377; ʿUmar, 1998, pp. 243-250).

##### **a) Expansion of meaning**

The meaning of the word is extended to become broader than the older version. In the case of terms of freedoms and rights, it is said to occur when the entitlements intended by the term develop and become wider as time passes. When this occurs, the old meaning of the term may fall out of use, or it may remain.

##### **b) Narrowing of meaning**

In contrast to expansion, the meaning of the term narrows and becomes restricted to use primarily in special situations. With terms of freedoms and rights, narrowing of the meaning may occur when entitlements become fewer than those understood in the old meaning.

##### **c) Amelioration of meaning**

The meaning of the term is more valued or “(more) positive” than before (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 28). For instance, *taḥrīr al-mar’ah* (liberation of women) acquires a more elevated meaning when Qāsim Amīn, a social reformer espousing Islamic modernising ideology, uses it as the title of his noteworthy book, published in 1899. He promotes the rights for women that were encouraged, by religious teaching and cultural values, as being beneficial for the society and for the lives of individuals. Previously, the term had a negative connotative meaning and was used by conservatives who were against women’s engagement in public life.

##### **d) Pejoration of meaning**

This occurs when a “(more) negative” meaning is conveyed by the word (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 28). For example, the term *siyāṣah* (politics) has

been used in texts as a forbidden word referring to the power that prevents people from demanding their rights (see Section 9.2.8).

This method of analysis is intended to produce lists of vocabularies of freedoms and/or rights for each period, illustrating how each term has changed over time and how its meaning has expanded or narrowed, and become more or less positive. After these lists are generated, the next step is to analyse the semantic fields.

#### 4.2.2. Analysis of the semantic field

Given that the semantic field is a structurally systematic organisation of semantically related vocabularies, the terms of freedoms and rights of each period will be listed to reflect different categories of terms. These categories are not pre-established, so they do not necessarily follow any particular standard of human rights. Table 4.5 provides a brief hypothetical example of how the terms which constitute the semantic field are constructed into a table.

From this table, we can see that the first row specifies the main categories of the terms of freedoms and rights that are expressed in a certain period, and under each main category is a list of terms that belongs to this field. The terms, as well as the vocabularies, can change over different periods.

<b>Personal freedom/rights</b>	<b>Intellectual freedom/rights</b>	<b>Economic freedom</b>	<b>Political freedom / rights</b>
<i>ḥurriyyah ṭabʿiyyah</i> (instinctive freedom)	<i>ḥurriyyat al-ʾārāʾ</i> - (freedom of expressing opinions)	<i>ḥurriyyat al-tijārah</i> (freedom of trade)	<i>ḥuqūq siyāsiyyah</i> (political rights)
<i>ḥurriyyah shakhṣiyyah</i> (personal freedom)		<i>ḥurriyyat al-milāḥah wa al-siyāḥah</i> (freedom to travel by sea and land)	
<i>ḥurriyyah madaniyyah</i> (civil freedom)			

**Table 4.5: Simplified example of how the terms which constitute the semantic field are constructed<sup>29</sup>**

#### ***4.2.2.1 Types of semantic change involved in semantic fields***

The following procedure, inspired by Naşr (1990), explains the two central types of changes that can be examined in semantic fields (pp. 127-131, 212-217, 280-282):

a) Expansion of the field:

Expansion in the semantic field occurs when an additional meaning emerges in the same category as the existing term. For instance, the sub-semantic field of political freedoms and rights in the early period includes only one term, which conveys the right to own property, whereas in a later period, the same sub-semantic field is expanded to include new terms conveying the right to vote and to stand for election.

b) Narrowing of the field:

Narrowing refers to the decrease in terms that constitute the semantic field.

The change (addition or loss) in the terms of freedoms and rights supports the idea that expansion reflects an associated expansion of actual freedom/rights; in contrast, the narrowing refers to a decrease in the vocabularies that is matched by a decrease in actual freedom and/or rights.

Hence, the expansion or restriction reflects the development, change or transition in the freedoms and rights in the society. The freedom entailed by semantic field expansion in a specific period may indicate the freedom that people enjoy in the society, or it may at least reflect awareness campaigns and activism addressing the concept of freedom. On the other hand, the retraction in the semantic field of freedom is likely to signify limitations on freedom in that period.

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<sup>29</sup> Constructed examples can be found in Tables 6.1, 8.1, 10.1.

The discussion and analysis highlight the cultural and political factors that may have contributed to the addition and loss of the terms in the semantic field.

The discussion of the vocabularies is broken down into three chronological periods, and the vocabularies of the three periods are discussed synchronically in Chapters Five, Seven, and Nine respectively. Each discussion is then followed by an analysis of the world view of freedoms and rights in the same period, in order to demonstrate how the text reflects specific perceptions and how these perceptions changed or were maintained over time.





## CHAPTER FIVE

### Discussion of Terms of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the First Period (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's Writings 1869-1873)

#### 5.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the terms of freedoms and rights found in the first period, in selected texts of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the discussion of the terms is based on the methodological model adapted from Agius (1984): first citing the Arabic passage that contains the relevant term, then providing an English translation of the passage, analysing the cultural and linguistic context to understand its use in context, and finally, discussing the term with an interest in determining the scope of rights intended by it.

After the vocabularies are discussed, the following chapter analyses the world view of freedoms and rights as reflected in the texts of this period, in order to show how the notion was perceived and understood in this early period.

This process helps to demonstrate al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's view of freedoms and rights, and to enable assessment of his actual contribution in introducing and developing ideas of freedoms and rights in Egypt at that time.

#### 5.1. The cultural context of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings in the first period<sup>30</sup>

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was seen as one of the first of the so-called 'enlighteners' who was open to exploring new ways of thinking and understanding the world (°Allām, 1960; Ḥasan, 1960; °Amārah, 2009; Ṭāhīr, 2011; cf. Kawtharānī, 2011). His writings reflect this influence, and the notion of freedom was one idea that he

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<sup>30</sup> Section 3.1.2 provides an overview of the geopolitical context in which the texts were produced. This includes political events as well as other cultural factors that have a potential influence on understanding the terms of freedoms and rights. Hence, it is important to remind the reader that the cultural context provides the grounds for making sense of the texts.

wanted to re-examine; he also wanted other Arab intellectuals to reconsider the implications and meanings of freedom.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, who came from a culturally and religiously well-educated background, wanted to expose his Arab readers to new possibilities and new ways of thinking, at a time when Egypt was going through a print and literacy revolution and the literate audience was likely to grow. This cultural environment provided him with an opportunity to articulate his ideas.

In his book *Manāḥij al-albāb al-Miṣriyyah fī mabāḥij al-'ādāb al-ʿaṣriyyah* [Egyptian approaches to the pleasures of contemporary arts], first published in 1869, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1869/2010a) puts forward his theoretical views and what he sees as a new approach to the development of modern Egypt in several disciplines, including economics, politics, sciences, and education. These theoretical views are (collectively) considered the foundation of modern Arab thought (Ḥijāzī, 1974). In fact, this book has been described as one that synthesises al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's thoughts (Qaranī, 2006, pp. 63-64) in a form which uniquely combines influences from his education and classical background, on the one hand, with his experiences and interaction with Europe, on the other. He dedicates the concluding chapter to discussing the duties and rights of the people who make up several classes of the society.

In another book, *Al-Murshid al-amīn fī tarbiyat al-banāt wa al-banīn* [The honest guide to educating girls and boys], first published in 1873, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1873/2010b) allocates a chapter to the idea of freedom, describing it as a main factor of civilisation. He proposes five main categories of freedom, each of which is explained according to what the term expresses and what the limitations of each type of freedom are. The terms of these five categories, which will be discussed below, are: *ḥurriyyah ṭabʿiyyah* (instinctive freedom), *ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah* (behavioural freedom), *ḥurriyyah dīniyyah* (religious freedom), *ḥurriyyah madaniyyah* (civil freedom), and *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom).

In other sections of the book, he discusses the state of civilisation in the country and the characteristics of a modern and civilised country. These include types of freedom such as *ḥurriyyat ibdāʾ al-'ārāʾ* (freedom of expressing opinions), as

well as freedoms having to do with economics, such as *ḥurriyyat al-filāḥah wa al-tijārah wa al-ṣināʿah* (freedom of agriculture, trade, and industry).

As noted earlier, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's conception of the types of freedoms was "subject to cultural, religious, and political considerations" (Kawtharānī, 2010, p. 428). There were three main factors that influenced his understanding of freedom:

- 1) His traditional religious culture. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was a Sheikh and a *faqīh* (jurist) of traditional Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) who learned and taught traditional Islamic sciences at al-Azhar University in Cairo.
- 2) His awareness and admiration of many aspects of Western civilisation. During his stay in Paris (1826-1831), studying on a scholarship awarded by Muḥammad ʿAlī as part of his project of reform to build a modern Egypt, he sampled different aspects of French culture, civilisation and sciences. He became familiar with the ideas of freedoms and rights by observing the consequences of the French Revolution; for instance, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī read the French Constitution and the works by such important authors as Voltaire and Montesquieu.
- 3) The political status quo in Egypt. After his time abroad, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī returned and worked as a civil servant in several institutions and government departments during the reign of Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha (r. 1805-1848). In the end, though, he was a bureaucrat in an authoritarian government where autocracy prevailed.

These factors may have influenced al-Ṭaḥṭāwī significantly in regard to how he introduced the terms of freedom. In the view of al-ʿUrwī (1993), al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's illustrations of terms of freedoms show:

clear overlap between liberal descriptions and jurisprudence analyses, as if the writer is striving [his] utmost to express liberal ideas in a traditional jurisprudence template (p. 49).

In the end, the constraints of a traditional system detracted from the liberalising influence that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī wished to have on his homeland.

## 5.2. The vocabularies of freedoms and rights in Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings

### 5.2.1. The central term of freedom

#### Term 1: *hurriyyah* (freedom)

الحرية من حيث هي: رخصة العمل المباح، من دون مانع غير مباح ولا معارض محذور. فحقوق جميع أهالي المملكة المتمدنة ترجع إلى الحرية، فتتصف المملكة بالنسبة للهيئة الاجتماعية بأنها مملكة متحصلة على حريتها، ويتصف كل فرد من أفراد هذه الهيئة بأنه حر، يباح له أن ينتقل من دار إلى دار ومن جهة إلى جهة، بدون مضايقة مضايق ولا إكراه مُكره، وأن يتصرف كما يشاء في نفسه ووقته وشغله، فلا يمنعه من ذلك إلا المانع المحدود بالشرع أو السياسة، مما تستدعيه أصول مملكته العادلة. ومن حقوق الحرية الأهلية أن لا يجبر الإنسان على أن ينفى من بلده، أو يعاقب فيها، إلا بحكم شرعي أو سياسي مطابق لأصول مملكته وأن لا يُضيق عليه في التصرف في ماله كما يشاء، ولا يحجر عليه، إلا بأحكام بلده، وأن لا يكتم رأيه في شيء، بشرط أن لا يخل ما يقوله أو يكتبه بقوانين بلده.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 505)

**Translation** [translated by the researcher except for what is in quotation marks, which is translated by Newman in (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1834/2011, p. 199fn 2)]

Freedom is “the faculty to perform a lawful task without any unlawful impediment or prohibited opposition”. “The rights of all people in a civilised country are rooted in freedom”. From a social construction perspective, the country is described as an entity that has attained its freedom, and each of its citizens is described as a free person who is able to move from one place to another, and from one destination to another, without experiencing harassment or compulsion from anyone. Every citizen is allowed to act according to his own will, in his own time, and to function as he pleases.

Nothing can prevent one's freedom except a prohibition by Islamic law or politics, as would be required by the principles of a just country. One of the rights that come with civil freedom is that one should not be banished from his country, nor should one be subject to punishment except with due legal or political process in accordance with the laws of that country. One should not be prevented from managing his money as he wishes, nor should one have his assets seized except by due judicial process. Similarly, one should not be prevented from expressing his opinions, provided that what is written does not violate the laws of the country.

## Cultural and linguistic context

It may be that considering the French understanding of freedom; studying the French Charter of 1814; and reading a number of principal works in law, philosophy and politics helped al-Ṭaḥṭāwī to better articulate to Arab readers the concept of personal freedoms – namely that all human beings *can* have freedom, and that it is their right to have freedom and to act according to their own free will. This French understanding of freedom influences al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings in various ways. One illustration of this is that he categorises freedom (*ḥurriyyah*) into five main divisions:

- *ḥurriyyah ṭabʿiyyah* (instinctive freedom),
- *ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah* (behavioural freedom),
- *ḥurriyyah dīniyyah* (religious freedom),
- *ḥurriyyah madaniyyah* (civil freedom), and
- *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (which may be translated as 'political freedom' but does not reflect the meaning of political freedom as we understand it now).

Newman sees this division as “a clear influence from Montesquieu as he, too, distinguished between five freedoms” (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1834/2011, p. 199fn 2). Other writers have suggested that in this division of freedoms, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī may have been influenced by the comparable division of the five main objectives (*al-Kulliyāt al-Khams*) of the *Sharʿah* (Islamic law),<sup>31</sup> which are the preservation of religion, life, property, progeny, and mind (al-Raysūnī, 2010).

Semantically, in this passage, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī describes freedom as permission (*rukḥṣah*), and ʿAmārah notes that in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's other texts, this term is always used as an equivalent to the term *ḥurriyyah* (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 505fn 1). It is important to note, however, that the meaning of *rukḥṣah* in Classical Arabic is an authorisation or permission for an action that was previously prohibited (Ibn Manẓūr, 1290/1968b, p. 40; cf. ʿUmar, 1998, p. 874). In practice, the authorisation is 'given' by an authority figure.

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<sup>31</sup> I do not have a specific source for this, but it would be an obvious influence insofar as he was an Islamic scholar.

This selection of the term *rukḥṣah* to describe the meaning of freedom may be an indication of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's concern that the rights of people be recognised as legal (rather than natural); i.e., that the rights are *given* "by virtue of decisions of suitably authoritative bodies within them" (Campbell, 2013), rather than being universal and innate (Wenar, 2015). According to this view, people acquire their rights according to an established system founded by a legal authority.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī recognises that the people's freedoms and rights should be protected by law, but he avoids specifying any duties or responsibilities of the ruling authority for ensuring people's rights to realise their freedoms. He does not describe the principles of the legal system that would guarantee them, except to say that the laws are to be formulated by the legal and political legislation of the state, which should be fair and just. He confirms that the law governs and restricts freedoms, but he points out that the rules should be based on justice and equity; he overvalues justice (*ʿadl*) as the principal value that must be considered in all laws. Presumably he expects the relevant laws to be consistent with two main sources: *sharʿ* (Islamic law), and *siyāṣah* (politics).

Whenever al-Ṭaḥṭāwī states an entitlement or explains any type of freedom, he goes on to directly and repeatedly place limitations on it. This is reflected in the text above, in which each statement of a right is coupled with a statement of restriction (which is repeated if it was mentioned previously), as in Table 5.1.

Statement of entitlement	Statement of restrictions
to perform a lawful task	without any unlawful impediment or prohibited opposition
Nothing can prevent one's freedom	except a prohibition by Islamic law or politics, as would be required by the fundamentals of a just country
One should not be banished from his country or subject to punishment	except with due legal or political process
One should not be prevented from managing his money as he wishes, nor should his assets be seized	except by due judicial process
One should not be prevented from expressing his opinions	Provided that what is written does not violate the laws of the country

**Table 5.1: Statements of entitlements vs. statements of restrictions in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's definition of *ḥurriyyah***

This enlightened intellectual was likely subject to political restrictions when producing his texts; he seems to walk a fine line between what he can and cannot mention explicitly. As a government employee, he had reason to be discreet and indirect in his choice of words.

These considerations should be taken into account in any discussion or analysis of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's terms of freedoms, and the text must be carefully inspected to uncover what he may be implying. Nevertheless, it is important not to judge or criticise his understanding of these concepts according to contemporary norms or according to the concept of freedom found in the French Charter of 1814. Although the charter had an important influence on al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's thought, it was produced in a completely different context.

This text shows how al-Ṭaḥṭāwī himself defined and understood freedom, and how he introduced the meaning of personal freedom to Arabic readers in the late nineteenth century. The text was undoubtedly influenced by the Articles of the French Charter of 1814, which he translated and discussed in his book *Takhlīs* (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1834/2011). These Articles [translated below by Newman] entitled citizens to a group of freedoms, among which were the freedom of individual ownership and the freedom of expression:

Article 4: Each of them is free, and their freedom is guaranteed. No-one can be interfered with except in accordance with some rights laid down in the law, in the form prescribed by it and as requested by the ruler<sup>32</sup> (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1834/2011, p. 199).

Article 8: French people may not be prevented from expressing their opinions, writing them down and printing them, provided they are not in breach of the law, which will suppress them if they are harmful (p. 200).

Article 9: All properties and lands are inviolable and no distinction is made between one property and another (p. 200).

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<sup>32</sup> Newman comments on al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's Arabic translation of the word "ruler" in this article: Evidently, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī did not quite know how to deal with the French '*poursuivi ni arrêté*' ('neither prosecuted nor arrested'), whereas he saw fit to add reference to the ruler (*al-ḥākim*) (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1834/2011, p. 199fn 2).

These freedoms, pertaining to individual ownership and freedom of expression, were guaranteed and organised in accordance with the law. Such types of freedom were perhaps not as finely defined in the Arabic political system as were political rights guaranteed by a constitution, although of course there were groups of rights provided to people, as in any given legal system. In the Arabic classical tradition, people's rights, such as rights to ownership and private property, are part of traditional *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Egypt had no political constitution at that time; later, the Egyptian Constitution of 1866 comprised eighteen Articles that regulated the establishment of the Consultative Assembly of Delegates and the election of its members (al-Mutawallī, 2002, pp. 5-8; see 7.1).

The following sections analyse the way that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī understood and explained his categories of freedoms, within the socio-historical context, in order to trace how this understanding changed and under what conditions.

### **Discussion of the term *ḥurriyyah***

In his definition of freedom, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī articulates what freedom means: that a person acts as he wishes without being stopped or prevented by the law. People are allowed to engage in personal activities and to have freedom of movement and relocation, without being harassed or constrained by anyone. They are free to behave as they wish on their private property, and they have the right not to have assets seized except as permitted by the law. In addition, they have the right to express opinions by means of writing and speaking; the right to be protected from unjust, extrajudicial punishments; and other legal rights. There are always constraints on these freedoms and rights as regards actions that are prohibited by legal and political systems, consistent with cultural norms.

It is obvious, especially when he discusses freedom of personal ownership and freedom of expressing ideas, that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was deeply influenced by the French Constitution, to the extent that Kawtharānī (2010) says about al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's definition of freedom in this text that it "seems to be a summary of the principles of human rights as expressed in the French Constitution" (p. 428; see 9.2.2 for a discussion of the 1789 Articles of the Declaration of Human and Civic



Rights). It is likely that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī hoped to replicate these principles in his own nation (see 3.1.2).

What is really important and new about this definition of freedom is that he considers freedom an *a priori* right for humans and the basis for all other human rights. In the view of al-ʿUrwī (1993), this is what sets apart the liberal concept of freedom from others (pp. 49-50). It appears that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī understood the liberal concept of freedom but was not committed to duplicating it exactly; instead, he produced a modified, more restrictive and conservative version for his Arabic readership.

In summary, this first text defines freedom as permission for individuals to do as they wish, within the religious and political constraints of their culture and country. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's use of the Arabic word *rukḥṣah* (permission that is given) to define *hurriyyah* (freedom) implies a recognition of human rights as a product of laws rather than as a natural entitlement. He was able to produce a new, refined understanding of freedom within modern discourse, one in which freedom is given to people without obstacles or hardship, as long as individuals remain within the law.

### 5.2.2. Terms of personal freedoms

**Term 1:** *hurriyyah tabʿiyyah* (instinctive freedom)

#### Text

فالحرية الطبيعية: هي التي خلقت مع الإنسان، وانطبع عليها، فلا طاقة لقوته البشرية على دفعها بدون أن يُعدّ دافعها ظالماً، كالأكل والشرب والمشى مما يشترك فيه جميع الأفراد ولا يستغنون عنه، مما لا ضرر فيه على الإنسان نفسه ولا على إخوانه، فلا يجوز مثلاً التخمّة، ولا أكل السموم، ولا أكل طعام الغير بدون إذنه.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 506)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

*Hurriyyah tabʿiyyah* (instinctive freedom) is the type that comes naturally with human beings and is ingrained within their nature, the hindrance of which is beyond their means, unless through an act of injustice. Such freedom includes actions such as eating, drinking and walking – actions that are common and indispensable to all humans and that harm neither the individual nor the human group. Hence, it excludes, for example, excess eating, consumption of poison and eating another individual's food without permission.

## Cultural and linguistic context

*Ḥurriyyah tabʿiyyah* is a new term coined by al-Ṭahṭāwī to name the first of his five categories. Linguistically, it can perhaps be considered a lexical addition to Arabic vocabularies of freedom, but the definition he provides for this type of freedom does not suggest any actual addition to people's entitlements. The question remains: what made al-Ṭahṭāwī include such actions under a term which constitutes one of his main categories of freedom, given that what was permitted by this type of freedom were necessary actions?

Clearly, he was influenced by the terms and ideas of freedoms in French literature, and he may have been influenced by the idea of 'natural rights', but he was extremely limited in what he could recommend. This is probably why he seemingly attempted to produce a concept that "liberals approve of and religious jurists do not object to" (al-ʿUrwī, 1993, p. 49).

## Discussion of the term

This type of freedom can be described as a kind of "biological" freedom (Qaranī, 2006, p. 67); the actions pertain to human necessities like eating, drinking, and moving. Al-Ṭahṭāwī himself justified the necessity and nature of this freedom by saying that one cannot be burdened by being prevented from undertaking these actions. Hence, he restricts this type of freedom to that which harms neither oneself nor others. This can be seen as an ethical restriction, since the restrictions mentioned here are actually those imposed by traditional *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), which also forbids eating stolen or harmful food, as well as greed (Wazārat al-Awqāf wa al-Shuʿūn al-Islāmiyyah, 1986, pp. 123-127).

In summary, al-Ṭahṭāwī adds to the lexical meaning of freedom without providing any significant addition as regards actual entitlements or freedoms.

### Term 2: *hurriyyah sulūkiyyah* (behavioural freedom)

#### Text

والحرية السلوكية: التي هي حسن السلوك ومكارم الأخلاق، هي الوصف اللازم لكل فرد من أفراد الجمعية، المستنتج من حكم العقل، بما تقتضيه ذمة الإنسان وتطمئن إليها نفسه في سلوكه في نفسه وحسن أخلاقه في معاملة غيره.

(al-Ṭahṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 506)

### **Translation** [translated by the researcher]

Behavioural freedom to engage in ethical, mannered conduct is an important attribute. This type of behaviour can be deduced with the guidance of reason, in which one can choose behaviour which satisfies one's own conscience in how to act in relation to others.

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

This term *ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah* (behavioural freedom) is the second of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's five categories of freedom. It relates to personal conduct involved in social behaviour, and what one is entitled to in interactions with others. He is seemingly concerned with ethics and the social responsibilities of individuals in regard to their moral conduct with others.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī does not specifically describe what 'ethical' behaviour comprises; instead, he recognises personal standards as the guide to goodness and acknowledges that even within the same society, ethical norms may differ because people are differently positioned socially and economically and thus have different attitudes concerning the acceptability of different behaviours.

The fact that he establishes these ethical principles not on religious grounds, but instead on shared norms of individual conscience, may be considered "a revolutionary development in the traditional principles of ethics" (Qaranī, 2006, p. 68) in Arab classical thought. This development in ethical principles apparently involves the influence of a Western model, since it is based on secular rather than religious norms. On the other hand, it may be seen as an attempt by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī to establish shared ethical standards that are not necessarily secular. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1834/2011) "stated that the French are among those whose decision about whether something is good or bad is based solely on reason" (p. 183).

### **Discussion of the term**

*Ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah*, according to al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, is the freedom to behave as one wishes, in accordance with one's personal standards, as long as such behaviour is ethical. He seems to argue that people within the society develop social norms that guide their behaviour towards one another, and that these norms are secular standards which guide people's actions.

Again, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī seems to be attempting to express liberal ideas about actions that will not aggravate those in power, and this is why he repeatedly brings up restrictions. He must reconcile two stances – that of the moderniser who defines what rights people should be entitled to, and that of the cleric and *faqīh* (Islamic jurist) who teaches people what actions and activities are religiously acceptable.

### 5.2.3. Terms of religious freedoms

#### Term 1: *hurriyyah dīniyyah* (religious freedom)

##### Text

والحرية الدينية: هي حرية العقيدة والرأي والمذهب، بشرط أن لا تخرج عن أصل الدين، كأراء الأشاعرة والماتريدية في العقائد، وآراء أرباب المذاهب المجتهدين في الفروع، فإن الإنسان يأمن على أن يتبع مذهباً من هذه المذاهب يتمسك به في العبادة.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 506)

##### Translation [translated by the researcher]

Religious freedom is the freedom of belief, doctrine, and opinion, and the freedom to follow a particular school of thought, provided that the fundamentals of religion are not breached, such as the views of the *Ashā'irah* and the *Mātarīdiyyah* doctrines,<sup>33</sup> as well as the views of the founding scholars of the Islamic schools of *fiqh* [jurisprudence]. Thus, one can feel confident that when following one of these schools of thought, they are adhering to the correct manner of worship.

##### Cultural and linguistic context

The term *hurriyyah dīniyyah* is the third of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's five categories of freedom. Here he defines and clarifies religious freedom, and then he points out its restrictions. Clearly, this type of religious freedom specifically applies to Muslims, just as the next text addresses types of freedom for people of other beliefs.

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<sup>33</sup> *Al-Ashā'irah* and *al-Mātarīdiyyah* are Sunni theological and philosophical schools of thought named after the famous medieval Islamic scholars Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashā'irī (d. 936) and Abū Maṣṣūr al-Mātarīdī (d. 944). Al-Ashā'irī "believed that the anthropomorphic expressions about God in the Qur'an were simply to be accepted without, however, stating how" (Netton, 1992, p. 41). "*Al-Mātarīdiyyah* placed a particular stress on God's justice and fairness" (Netton, 1992, p. 166); they used well-known evidence of reason and logic in their arguments to prove Islamic religious arguments (al-Juhanī, 1420 AH, pp. 83, 95).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī defines this type of religious freedom in a restricted manner, one skewed to complement his *Sunnī* background and training as a cleric who guides people to the ‘straight path’, rather than from the perspective of a liberal intellectual who argues neutrally for people’s freedoms. In this text, he seems to provide a *fatwā* (religious advisory opinion) rather than a liberal or legal view on human rights.

### Discussion of the term

According to his somewhat narrow view, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s concept of religious freedom for Muslims refers only to their freedom to choose from among a group of *Sunnī madhāhib* (schools of thought), including the *Ashāʿirah* and the *Mātarīdiyyah* theologies in addition to the four schools of *fiqh* (jurisprudence): *Ḥanafī*, *Mālikī*, *Shāfiʿī*, and *Ḥanbalī*. He does not include any other beliefs or other sects within Islam, for he believes that any deviation from these would take one outside the fold of the religion.

**Term 2:** *hurriyyat al-dhimmah* (freedom of the People of the Book, i.e., Jews and Christians)

### First text

وبالجملة، فرخصة تدّين أهل الكتاب بدينهم مؤسسة على العهود المأخوذة عليهم عند الفتوح الإسلامي، وكل مسلم يحفظ العهد، لأن العهد في الحقيقة إنما هو الله تعالى [...] وقد ذكر بعض ما يتعلق بذلك في (المقدمة) عند التكلم على حرية الذمة التي تُعتبر عند أهل الأديان.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1869/2010a, p. 708)

### Translation [translated by the researcher]

In short, the permissibility for the People of the Book [i.e., Jews and Christians] to embrace their religion is founded upon the covenants that were ratified during the Islamic conquests, which every Muslim must preserve, as covenants are essentially pacts made with God Himself [...] Other issues related to this have already been mentioned previously in the introduction where *hurriyyat al-dhimmah* was discussed.

### Second text

فمن أراد أن يقطع عن ملة تدينها بدينها، أو يعارضها في حفظ ملتها، المخفورة الذمة شرعاً فهو في الحقيقة معترض على مولاه فيما قضاه لها وأولاه، حيث قضت حكمته الإلهية لها بالاتصاف بهذا الدين، فمن ذا الذي يجترئ أن يعانده **﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا**

يَرَّالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ} [هود: 118] وحسبنا في هذا المعنى قول الكرار: أما وقد اتسع نطاق الإسلام فكل امرئ وما يختار، فبهذا كانت رخصة التمسك بالأديان المختلفة جارية عند كافة أهل الملل، ولو خالف دين المملكة المقيمة بها، بشرط أن لا يعود منها على نظام المملكة أدنى خلل.  
(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1869/2010a, p. 310)

**Translation** [translated by the researcher, except the Qur'ān verse translation by Abdel Haleem (2010, p. 144)]

Thus, whoever wants to prevent a people from practising their religion, or opposes their right to preserve their practices, which are inviolable in Islamic law, is effectively in opposition to his Lord's will. This is because His divine wisdom ruled that this people should follow the religion in question. Thus, who will dare to stand against His will? {If your Lord had pleased, He would have made all people a single community, but they continue to have their differences } [Hūd 118]

In this context, it is sufficient to consider al-Karrār's saying:<sup>34</sup> since Islam became widespread, every human has to choose. Therefore, the permissibility to embrace different religions is recognised in all religious communities, even if these religions are incompatible with the religion of the state in which they reside, provided that their practices do not cause harm to the state system.

### Cultural and linguistic context

In the introduction to *Manāḥij al-albāb*, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī writes of religious freedom as a pillar of what he calls *tamaddun ma<sup>c</sup>nawī* (moral civilisation), and he discusses the moral order of any civilised country. He argues for religious freedom for people of other religions and belief systems.

The last chapter discusses the duties and rights of various types of people toward their country; these include rulers, scholars, judges, clerics, conquerors, and people in agriculture, industry and trade. In discussing the duties and rights of clerics, he includes Muslims, Jewish and Christian clerics, arguing for their religious freedom in Muslim communities by providing evidence from the Qur'ān, Islamic literature, and Islamic history, as well as other human history.

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<sup>34</sup> Al-Karrār, which means 'brave fighter', is an honorific for ʿAlī bin Abī Ṭālib (d. 661), the fourth Islamic Caliph.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī argues for a broader religious freedom for people of all religions and belief systems, and to support his position, he points to the granting of religious freedom to Jews and Christians throughout Islamic history. In the second text, while discussing ‘moral civilisation’, he argues for “the permissibility to embrace different religions”, without restricting this to the People of the Book.

In both texts, he provides a body of religious evidence that includes fundamental Islamic texts (i.e., a Qur’ān verse), sayings of a well-known Islamic leader (a companion of the Prophet Muḥammad), and other historical evidence. He also employs a group of historical and religious expressions, such as *ḥikmah ilāhiyyah* (divine wisdom), to justify religious freedom in a Muslim country. By repeatedly justifying this type of religious freedom, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī attempts to preclude any possible objection from traditionalist clerics, who may restrict the understanding and interpretations to what already exists in the tradition, and who may object to any modern interpretations of Islamic literature, history and fundamental texts.

In this context, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī is considered the first Arab intellectual to introduce the idea of (Egyptian) nationalism, making a “distinction between the religious and the national form of commitment”, which appears to prioritise the national over the religious (Tibi, 1997, p. 87). He proposed a national bond among *abnā’ al-waṭan* (citizens of the same country) (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1869/2010a, pp. 398-401, 1873/2010b, p. 458). Before this, there was a religious bond among people who shared the same beliefs – *al-ukhuwwah al-dīniyyah*, and this prevailed during the Ottoman and Mamlūk periods. Other bonds existed among those who shared certain occupations, and the groups based on bonds of kinship (tribes) maintained norms that functioned almost as civil regulations (ʿAbd al-Karīm, 1984, p. 561). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s idea of a national bond, however, required the Egyptian people “to assert their independence and constitute a civil association capable of creating a powerful state” on a civil basis (Choueiri, 2005, p. 70, 1989, p. 13).

The era of Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha motivated this change and triggered the emergence of Egyptian nationalism. He attempted to gain independence from the Ottoman Empire and establish a national army that employed Egyptians. In the interest of fulfilling military needs, he established modern institutions such

as schools, factories, and hospitals; to defend the coastline, he strengthened the navy by setting up an armoury for it, as well as academies and scholarships. Egyptians were employed in these new institutions, as well as in other civil services, and they were given equal ranks (see 3.1.2).

These changes undoubtedly paved the way for Egyptian nationalism – a concept that was later expressed in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writing. In the paragraphs above, he attempts to create a secular notion of citizenship and nationality within the state, where people are recognised as citizens regardless of their religion or belief system.

Semantically, he puts two terms together to express a type of religious freedom: *ḥurriyyat al-dhimmah*. The term is clearly derived from two terms: *ḥurriyyah* (freedom), and *dhimmah*, which comes from *ahl al-dhimmah*, a historical expression in traditional Islamic literature meaning “an agreement of protection”, in this case for non-Muslim citizens in Muslim states (Netton, 1992, p. 71). The other term he uses to convey a type of religious freedom for non-Muslims is *rukḥṣat al-tamassuk bil-adyān al-mukhtalifah* (the permissibility of embracing different religions).

### **Discussion of the term**

In the first text above, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī refers to *ḥurriyyat al-dhimmah* as “the permissibility for the People of the Book (i.e., Jews and Christians) to embrace their religion”. Clearly, he had in mind a classical and historically-restricted meaning of religious freedom, a freedom known and understood in the period of the Islamic conquests between the seventh and eighth centuries. He notes that a legal or political condition for this type of freedom is that it must not involve any disturbances to the existing systems of the country.

In the second text, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī argues for *rukḥṣat al-tamassuk bil-adyān al-mukhtalifah* (the permissibility of embracing different religions), without mentioning any specific restrictions; he writes that “every human has to choose”. To support his argument, he brings together different types of religious and historical evidence to prove that this type of freedom is grounded in both Islamic teachings and the historical tradition of Islam. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī attempts to argue, albeit indirectly, for broader and non-restrictive religious freedoms for



non-Muslims in Muslim countries, so as to establish nationality on a secular basis.

In summary, in the first text, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses a new expression to convey a classical historical meaning of religious freedom, whereas in the second text, he provides a non-restricted meaning of religious freedom, in an attempt to argue that less consideration be paid to religious affiliation and more to equal rights and freedoms for all citizens (Jabrūn, 2015).

In both cases, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī once again restricts this freedom, stipulating that “their practices do not cause harm to the state system.” Although he does not explain exactly what that means, it is presumably a political condition, open to interpretation by political authorities.

#### 5.2.4. Terms of economic freedoms

**Term 1:** *hurriyyah siyāsiyyah* or *dawliyyah* (administrative or governmental freedom)

##### Text

والحرية السياسية، أي الدولية، هي: تأمين الدولة لكل أحد من أهاليها على أملاكه الشرعية المرعية، وإجراء حريته الطبيعية بدون أن تتعدى عليه في شيء منها، فبهذا يباح لكل فرد أن يتصرف فيما يملكه جميع التصرفات الشرعية، فكأن الحكومة بهذا ضمنت للإنسان أن يسعد فيها مادام مجتنباً لإضرار إخوانه.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, pp. 506-507)

**Translation** [translated by Zolondek (1964, p. 94)]

*Al-ḥurriyyah al-siyāsīyah*; that is, *al-dawliyyah*, is the state's guarantee to every one of its inhabitants for his legal possessions and his exercising his natural freedom (*al-ḥurriyyah al-ṭabīʿiyyah*)<sup>35</sup> without transgressing in any part thereof. Thus, it is allowed for everyone to administer his property within the bounds of legal dispositions. It is as though the government therewith ensured a person's happiness as long as he avoided harming his fellowman.

##### Cultural and linguistic context

This term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah*, or *dawliyyah*, represents the last of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's five categories of freedom. Although *siyāsiyyah* may be translated as 'political',

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<sup>35</sup> In the edition of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's book that I used, this term is *ḥurriyyah ṭabīʿiyyah*, which I have translated as instinctive freedom.

he is actually referring here to a type of legal and/or economic freedom that entitles the members of a society to undertake their own economic activities, with the role of government being to guarantee the rights of individuals to engage in economic actions and practices.

Semantically, the word *siyāṣah* in Classical Arabic refers to handling or governing, but al-Ṭaḥṭāwī employs the word in the classical sense of governing, not according to the modern political meaning. It should be noted that he was the first Arabic writer to contribute significantly to the semantic expansion of the word *siyāṣah* (to include the modern political sense) when he translated the Arabic word *siyāṣah* as an equivalent of the French term *politique* (°Abd al-°Azīz, 2008, p. 311). Due to political constraints, he has nothing to say regarding political freedoms and rights, though. He interprets the term ‘political’ to mean ‘administrative’; thus the government’s responsibility is simply to ensure people’s rights to administer their own properties.

### Discussion of the term

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* or *dawliyyah* to mean freedom of ownership for individuals. He asserts that people should have the right to administer their own properties and that the state is responsible for ensuring that their rights are legally undertaken and performed.

**Terms 2-3:** *ḥurriyyat al-milāḥah wa al-siyāḥah* (freedom to travel by sea and land), *ḥurriyyat al-filāḥah wa al-tijārah wa al-sināʿah* (freedom of agriculture, trade, and industry)

### First text

ومن أعظم مُعين على التمدن: حرية الملاحة والسياحة في البر والبحر؛ فإنها عادت على جميع ممالك الدنيا بالثروة والغنى والاطلاع على عجائب الدنيا.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 503)

### Translation [translated by the researcher]

One of the greatest facilitators of civilisation is the freedom of maritime transportation, and tourism on land or sea. This has often brought wealth and fortune to all the world’s states, and it allows them to see the wonders of the world.

## Second text

وأعظم حرية في المملكة المتمدنة: حرية الفلاحة والتجارة والصناعة، فالترخيص فيها من أصول فن الإدارة الملكية، فقد ثبت بالأدلة والبراهين أن هذه الحرية من أعظم المنافع العمومية، وأن النفوس مائلة إليها من القرون السابقة التي تقدم فيها التمدن إلى هذا العصر.

(al-Ṭahṭāwī, 1873/2010b, pp. 507-508)

## Translation [translated by the researcher]

The greatest freedom in a civilised country is that of agriculture, trade, and industry. Allowing these freedoms is a genuine art of statecraft as evidence shows that these freedoms bring general benefit, and that these freedoms meet people's desires across centuries, particularly when civilisation's progress was served.

## Cultural and linguistic context

Al-Ṭahṭāwī is writing during a period of economic, political, social and cultural upheavals, both internal and external, which brought about the end of the economic system founded by Muḥammad °Alī. He focuses most on those types of freedom that involve the individual's participation in economic business activities, since these types of activities were less restricted by the political authorities.

The term *ḥurriyyat al-filāḥah wa al-tijārah wa al-ṣināʿah* (freedom of agriculture, trade, and industry) is defined by listing the economic and cultural benefits that a country gains when people are involved in economic activities, from the vantage point of their rights and desires to develop a modern economy.

Egypt, which has a Mediterranean coastline, had always traded with the West. In the Mamlūkī period, the Mediterranean coastline saw frequent interaction between East and West. During the Ottoman period, trade and cultural links between Egypt and the Western world were cut off, and this coincided with the European opening up of the maritime trade route through the Cape of Good Hope, so that Arab traders no longer dominated the spice trade. As a result, the weakness of economic trade activities on the Egyptian coastline became apparent (al-Shayyāl, 1970, pp. 11-12).

Muḥammad °Alī Pasha adopted an economic policy based on the monopoly of the commercial sector, with commercial agriculture as well as industry coming under the control of the State. The 1838 Anglo-Ottoman Treaty undermined this

monopoly system and led to the opening of Egyptian markets for English goods. A merchant class began to emerge as landlords and merchants launched industrial projects, and these developments strengthened the influence of merchants in various fields. There were also negative economic and social effects, including the exploitation of farmers, the restriction of business influences, the obstruction of development in agricultural projects, and the disappearance of small, individual industrial projects (al-Sharbīnī, 1995, pp. 20-26).

In the first text, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī indicates that one of the reasons why previous generations of Arabs and Europeans were able to succeed in trade was their freedom to engage in economic activities. In his view, this played a key role in developing society and promoting its independence, and this was particularly important for Egyptian society.

The second text shows that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī supports the individual's right to initiate commercial and industrial projects, but he stipulates that they be trained and qualified. He may have included this condition so that the individuals' ventures would have a better chance of success, which is important for any reform to occur. On the other hand, this may have been an attempt by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī to indirectly condemn the state's monopoly over economic projects and to advocate that people be allowed to have their own economic activities, as Qaranī (2006) suggests (pp. 71-72). In any case, Ṭaḥṭāwī still has to offer reasons for restricting people's rights with certain conditions that are not necessarily political ones.

### **Discussion of the terms**

Apparently, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī refers to *ḥurriyyat al-milāḥah wa al-siyāḥah* (freedom to travel by sea and land) as freedom of movement for commercial purposes. Although Egypt has historically had international trade links, he appears to argue that not only does this freedom have many obvious economic benefits, but it also requires institutionalisation if it is to be enjoyed on a stable basis.

This presents freedom as a set of rights and obligations, and it suggests that the state should grant rights to landowners and merchants if it wishes to enjoy international trade links. Here, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī advocates the rights of individuals to

engage in economic activities and projects in key sectors; it may be argued that by focusing on individuals, he is encouraging Egyptians to enter the world of trade by pointing out the most obvious benefits of freedom of movement, and he hopes that Egyptians will be encouraged to contribute to a modernised economy.

Although he apparently believes that this type of freedom should not be restricted, he suggests a requirement – namely, education that qualifies people to be involved in economic activities and business, because when individuals are well-trained, they will be better able to take part in economic activity. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī may sincerely have thought that the freedom to practise economic activities freely would not achieve its potential benefits, for either individuals or the state, unless professional qualifications were required for engaging in various occupations. In practice, though, he was providing excuses for rulers to restrict this freedom; after all, he was under their control and may have wanted to avoid displeasing them.

#### 5.2.5. Terms of Intellectual freedoms

**Term 1:** *hurriyyat ibdā' al-'ārā'* (freedom of expressing opinions)

##### Text

ومما أعان على سعة دائرة التمدن في بلاد الدنيا ترخيص جميع الملوك للعلماء وأصحاب المعارف في تدوين الكتب الشرعية والحكمية والأدبية والسياسية، ثم تُوسَّع في حرية ذلك بنشره طبعاً وتمثيلاً، وخصوصاً جرائد الوقائع، لا سيما في بلاد أوروبا بقانون حرية إبداء الآراء بشرط، عدم ما يوجب الاختلال في الحكومة بسلوك سبيل الوسط بغير تفريط ولا شطط.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 503)

##### Translation [translated by the researcher]

What helped different countries to expand the reach of civility, was the rulers granting scholars and intellectuals license to write legal, philosophical, literary and political books. This [freedom to write books] was then expanded by having them published, particularly in newspapers, especially in European countries through laws that prescribed freedom of expression. This freedom is contingent on texts not destabilising the government, and adhering to a moderate and decent approach, without negligence.

## Cultural and linguistic context

After the renaissance that the country experienced in the time of Muḥammad ʿAlī, Egypt's educational and cultural life was suffering from the effects of a recession during the reign of Saʿīd Pashā (r. 1854-1863), who showed no interest in education. The Bureau of Schools (i.e., Ministry of Education) was closed during his reign, and the scientific scholarships to Europe fell into abeyance. In the following period, during the reign of Ismāʿīl Pasha (r. 1863-1879), the scientific, cultural and educational renaissance flourished once again. Schools were established at different levels and in different fields, scholarships to Europe and scientific associations increased, and many scientific and literary journals were established (al-Rāfiʿī 1932/1987a).

The *Qalam al-Tarjamah* (Translation Adjunct) was first established in 1841, possibly as an annex to a department of the School of Translation, which was first established in 1835 by, or at least in response to, the efforts of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī. It had been closed in 1849 in the era of ʿAbbās Pasha, but it was now re-established for the purpose of translating French laws, and al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was appointed as its Head. The School of Languages was re-established as *Madrasat al-Idārah wa al-Aṣun* (The School of Administration and Languages), for the purpose of training qualified judges and jurists (al-Shayyāl, 1951/2000b, pp. 38-44). It seems that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was aware of the revival of a group of cultural institutions and took this opportunity to call for more freedoms concerning intellectual activities.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī observed and experienced various types of freedoms granted by the French Charter of 1814, among them the freedom of expressing opinions, which was guaranteed in Article 8. The expression *ḥurriyyat ibdāʾ al-ʾārāʾ* (freedom of expressing opinions) refers to what al-Ṭaḥṭāwī stated was European law, referred to in this Article. Nevertheless, he seems to have had no choice but to suggest a modified version of freedom of expression, which was compatible with the social and political considerations and restrictions in Egyptian society at that time.

## Discussion of the term

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī mentions that one of the direct requirements of civilisation – *tamaddun* – is the freedom to express opinions, especially verbally and in publishing. He presents a limited freedom of expression, though, for the elite only, enabling them to express their opinions in various disciplines including law, philosophy, literature and politics, and to publish their opinions in books, journals, and newspapers. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī emphasises that this freedom should not destabilise the government or breach cultural norms.

In summary, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī understands and explains this type of freedom as the freedom to “debate scientific issues” (Yared, 1996, p. 50). His orientation as an educator leads him to confine this type of freedom to the intellectual elite; his view is that only educated people are eligible to publish opinions, and it is their duty to educate others (i.e., *noblesse oblige*).

### 5.2.6. Terms of social freedoms and rights

**Term 1:** *hurriyyah madaniyyah* (civil freedom)

#### Text

والحرية المدنية: هي حقوق البلاد والأهالي الموجودين في مدينة بعضهم على بعض، فكان الهيئة الاجتماعية المؤلفة من أهالي المملكة قد تضامنت وتواطأت على أداء حقوق بعضهم لبعض، وأن كل فرد من أفرادهم ضمن للباقيين أن يساعدهم على فعلهم كل شيء لا يخالف شريعة البلاد، وأن لا يعارضوه، وأن ينكروا جميعاً على من يعارضه في إجراء حريته، بشرط أن لا يتعدى حدود الأحكام.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 506)

**Translation** [translated by Zolondek (1964, p. 94)]

*Al-ḥurriyyah al-madanīyah* [civil freedom] is the mutual right of the inhabitants of a city. It is as though the social order (*al-hai'ah al-ijtimā'īyah*) which is made up of the inhabitants of the state cooperate and share the responsibility for the realization of their rights; and that every individual guarantees to the rest his help in any action which is not contrary to the law, rebuking those who oppose one's exercising his freedom as long as he does not transgress the limits of the law.

## Cultural and linguistic context

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's definition of civil freedom does not refer to any legal entitlements for individuals; instead, it refers to the 'social responsibilities' of people to respect one another's personal freedoms. In this context, he is attempting to raise public awareness in order to ensure mutual rights, by which people should rebuke anyone who opposes someone else's exercise of freedom, as long as that person is not violating the law. Remarkably for that time, these rights actually have a secular foundation and reflect the influence of French thought. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī is silent on codifying the rights and personal freedoms in the law, though, and this is fundamentally different from the French version. Again, this is because of what he was able to say in the political context of Egypt at the time.

## Discussion of the term

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī defines *ḥurriyyah madaniyyah* as the people's responsibilities to each other in fulfilling their reciprocal rights. In this sense, he is referring to the individual's responsibility toward the group and ensuring that everyone enjoys personal freedom. According to this view, the political authorities are not responsible in any way for ensuring people's civil rights. Moreover, civil freedom does not seem to include any type of political or public activity. He discusses freedoms of a personal nature only and does not explicitly mention public affairs or legal guarantees.

**Term 2:** *ḥuqūq madaniyyah* (civil rights), sometimes referred to as *ḥuqūq khusūsiyyah shakhsiyyah* (private personal rights)

## Text

وبسط الكلام على عموم الرعية أن يقال: إن لهم حقوقاً في المملكة تُسمى بالحقوق المدنية، يعني: حقوق أهالي المملكة الواحدة بعضهم على بعض، وتسمى بالحقوق الخصوصية الشخصية—في مقابلة الحقوق العمومية—وهي عبارة عن الأحكام التي تدور عليها المعاملات في الحكومة، وهذه الحقوق في كتب الفقه عبارة عن: المعاملات، والأنكحة، والفرائض، والوصايا، والحدود، والجنايات، والدعاوى، والبيانات، والأقضية. فالحقوق المدنية المذكورة هي: حقوق أهل العمران بعضهم على بعض لحفظ أملاكهم وأموالهم ومنافعهم ونفوسهم وأعراضهم، وما لهُم وما عليهم محافظةً ومدافةً.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1869/2010a, pp. 665-666)



### **Translation** [translated by the researcher]

To explain rights of subjects, it can be said that they have rights called civil rights, that is, rights of the inhabitants of the state toward each other, which are [also] called personal private rights, in contrast to public rights. They are with regard to the laws of transactions and various dealings with the government. These rights are mentioned in the books of Islamic jurisprudence, with regard to dealings and transactions, marriage contracts, inheritances, wills, the penal code, criminal law, claims, evidence, and judicial law. Therefore, these civil rights are the rights of the inhabitants upon each other to safeguard their properties, wealth, faculties, lives and honour, and their rights and responsibilities for the purpose of preservation and progress.

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

The definition that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī provides for the term *ḥuqūq madaniyyah* (civil rights) is consistent with his definitions of other terms of freedom, namely, civil freedom. As discussed earlier, the religious cleric, who experienced and admired Western civilisation and political institutions, was keen to apply these concepts to his own society. At the same time, he was very much subject to restrictions on what he could say. In fact, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's definition is no more than a combination of what already existed and what was permitted by culture, and it refers to the concept of *ḥuqūq al-ʿibād* (people's rights) as described in traditional Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). *Fiqh* is divided into many categories, one of which (*muʿāmalāt*) is concerned with different types of transactions and dealings among people (Wazārat al-Awqāf wa al-Shuʿūn al-Islāmiyyah, 1990, pp. 27-46). Another category comprises financial transactions, and others cover issues such as inheritance, marriage, contracts, and criminal and commercial jurisprudence (Qaranī, 2006, p. 69).

Semantically, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī provides two new terms: *ḥuqūq madaniyyah* (civil rights) and *ḥuqūq khuṣūṣiyyah shakhṣiyyah* (private personal rights), both of which are used to communicate the traditional existing concept of *ḥuqūq al-ʿibād* (people's rights). He adds a new lexical term without any corresponding addition at the semantic level.

## Discussion of the term

As stated above, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's concept of *ḥuqūq madaniyyah* (civil rights) is no more than what already existed in traditional Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) under the category of *ḥuqūq al-ʿibād* (people's rights), i.e., legal rulings on transactions. These types of transactions are supposed to be organised by a legal authority, and he refers to them as central to government work. Still, he mentions the responsibility of individuals to safeguard each other's rights. Surprisingly, he does not specify any entitlements for individuals under this term, aside from noting the general right to engage in transactions aimed at protecting people's lives, property, money, and lineage (honour). No legal (constitutional) procedures are provided for achieving these entitlements.

However, the description by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī can be understood to contain an ethical orientation, creating public awareness of the idea of rights. He emphasises that this involves the ethical responsibilities of people to respect the entitlements of others, to the extent that he considers this a virtue integral to a person's integrity (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1869/2010a, pp. 398-399, 436). At least implicitly, the classification of rights into those pertaining to different classes also suggests a moral orientation in the social order, namely, that differences among people are right and proper and that these differences are reflected in entitlements.

### 5.2.7. Terms of political freedoms and rights

**Term 1:** *ḥurriyyat al-madhāhib al-siyāsiyyah* (freedom of political doctrines)

#### Text

ومثل ذلك حرية المذاهب السياسية، وآراء أرباب الإدارات الملكية في إجراء أصولهم وقوانينهم وأحكامهم على مقتضى شرائع بلادهم، فإن ملوك الممالك ووزراءهم مرخصون في طرق الإجراءات السياسية بأوجه مختلفة ترجع إلى مرجع واحد وهو حسن السياسة والعدل.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1873/2010b, p. 506)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

Similar to that [i.e., religious freedom] is the freedom of political ideologies and doctrines, [which] involves the opinions of the leading figures of statecraft in conducting their laws and rules according to their country's legislation. Heads of state and their ministers are authorised to take political measures in different ways that refer to a single source, which is that of political conduct and justice.

## Cultural and linguistic context

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī compares religious freedom to this so-called ‘freedom of political doctrines’. He only finds one similarity: that just as one can adhere to his worship by following a religious school of thought, rulers and statesmen somehow have a parallel authority to have the public follow their rule.

He is employing the term *ḥurriyyah* to support the power of absolute rule, claiming that rulers are qualified to rule and to manage the state. Certainly this is a very limited idea of freedom, and one that would not even be recognised as freedom from a liberal perspective. In contrast, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī is silent on political freedom for the general public.

## Discussion of the term

It was noted in Section 5.2.3 that in his discussion on *ḥurriyyah dīniyyah*, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1873/2010b) mentions that Muslims are free to follow “the views of the founding scholars of the Islamic schools of *fiqh* [jurisprudence]”, and he justifies this with the argument that “one can feel confident that when following one of these schools of thought, they are adhering to the correct manner of worship” (p. 506). Similarly, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī equates the Islamic scholars who founded Islamic schools of thought to statesmen, since they are authorised to manage and rule the state’s affairs. In advocating the role of religious as well as political leaders to give opinions and manage the country, he gives leaders an absolute right to rule, as long as they manage the state competently and rule with justice.

## Term 2: *ḥuqūq ʿumūmiyyah* (public rights)

### Text

ثم أن للملوك في ممالكهم حقوقاً تسمى المزاياء، وعليهم واجبات في حق الرعايا، فمن مزاياء المَلِك أنه خليفة الله في أرضه، وأن حسابه على ربه؛ فليس عليه في فعله مسئولية لأحد من رعاياه، وإنما يُذَكَّر للحُكْم والحِكمة من طرف أرباب الشرعيات أو السياسات برفق ولين، لإخطاره بما عسى أن يكون قد غفل منه، مع حُسن الظن به، لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: “الدين النصيحة”<sup>36</sup> فقلنا: لم<sup>37</sup> [!] يا رسول الله؟ قال: “الله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولأئمة المسلمين وعامتهم”.

(al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, 1869/2010a, p. 660);

<sup>36</sup> One letter is missing as a result of a spelling mistake or printing error; the correct word is “النصيحة” (al-ʿĪd, 2001, p. 93).

<sup>37</sup> The correct word is “لمن”.

**Translation** [translated by the researcher except the Ḥadīth (Prophet's saying) translation, which is taken with slight changes from Ibn Rajab (1431/2007, p. 119)]

Moreover, heads of state enjoy rights called entitlements, as well as shouldering responsibilities toward their subjects. The entitlements of heads of state include that he is the successor of God on His earth, and that his reckoning is only by God, and no citizen shall bear the burden of his actions or decisions. It is also deemed that those of knowledge and specialty shall be gently reminded and advised by those who are qualified in jurisdiction and policies. So he can be notified of what he might not be aware of, while they should be thinking well of him, due to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him), "The *dīn* [religion] is sincerity." [The people] said, "Towards whom?" He said, "Towards God, His Book, His Messenger, the leaders of the Muslims and the generality of them."

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

It was mentioned in Section 3.1.2 that in the last chapter of his book *Manāḥij*, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī advocates what he calls the duties and rights of the inhabitants of the state. He divides these rights according to social classes: *wulāt al-'umūr* (rulers), *al-ra'īyyah* (subjects), and *al-'ulamā' wa al-quḍāt wa umanā' al-dīn* (scholars, judges, and trustees of the religion). In this text, the term 'rights' only appears in the discussion of the first two classes, i.e., *ḥuqūq al-mulūk*, (rights of heads of state or rulers), and *ḥuqūq al-ra'īyyah* (rights of subjects).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses a religious text (the *Ḥadīth*), as well as expressions of a religious nature that had been used in the Qur'ān and employed in the text, to support what he argues are the rights of heads of state. Examples of these expressions include: *Khalīfat Allāh fī arḍih* (successor of God on His earth), and *ḥisābuh 'ind Rabbih* (his reckoning is only by God). What makes his concept of "rulers' rights" clear is his use of the word *mazāyā* as a semantic equivalent for the term 'entitlements'; in literary Arabic, this means favourable features, in the context of the rulers' rights. This clearly suggests that rulers have rights, and these are advantages that enhance their absolute rule over their subjects. Moreover, these rights, and therefore the roles in the social hierarchy with which they are associated, are portrayed as 'God-given', and thus not to be tampered with.

This view of absolute entitlement is, in fact, compatible with the political views of traditional Islamic political thought as found in the literature of Islamic political and religious jurists in the Umayyad period (661-750). This literature, which clearly combines the religious with the political, represents the political thoughts of traditional Islamic thinkers and jurists of the period, such as al-Shawkānī (d. 1834), al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), al-Murādī (d. 1096), and al-Māwardī (1058). The main theme of these writings is advice from the author to the absolute ruler, urging him to rule with justice and suggesting practical means for establishing this justice. The importance of this 'advice' is that the recipient is considered to be responsible only to the state, with his own justice reflected in the well-being of the state (al-<sup>c</sup>Allām, 2006, pp. 7-9; Būtshīsh, 2014, pp. 11-12). This view seems to be consistent with traditional Islamic political theory as represented in these writings.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's text above reflects a similar theme; he quotes the *Ḥadīth* to refer to the term *al-naṣṭḥah*, which he employs in his text to refer to political 'advice' that addresses the ruler and differentiates the ruler from those who are experts in the art of statecraft.

Undoubtedly, according to this view, the totalitarian ruler has complete responsibility for governing the state; thus such a text (which is in line with the so-called Sulṭānī's political writings; see Section 5.2.7) serves only to enhance the power of the absolute ruler. Although al-Ṭaḥṭāwī writes in a different political context (i.e., not under an Islamic monarchy), he is committed to the same political ideas employed by a dictatorial government that uses traditional religious and political ideas to increase its power. Given his opinion that they deserve to rule with absolute power, the impression that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was a religious figure who was used by the regime to enhance its power is unavoidable.

### **Discussion of the term**

There is little that can be said in a discussion of this term because the term *ḥuqūq* (rights) in reference to political leaders was only used to recount the favourable privileges of the absolute ruler in a traditional political-religious manner. As such, the term *ḥuqūq* is completely emptied of its meaning related

to the key ideas of human rights; not only that, but the term is actually used in a context that boosts dictatorial power.

### **5.3. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter has examined terms of freedoms and rights that were used to express different types of entitlements in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings, which are representative of the first period covered in this research. In the following chapter, a structural analysis of these terms is performed, with a particular interest in accounting for the world view in this period and how it contextualises the terms of rights and freedoms.

Personal freedom	Religious freedom	Economic freedom	Intellectual freedom	Social freedom	Political freedom
<i>ḥurriyyah ṭabʿiyyah</i> (instinctive freedom)	<i>ḥurriyyah dīniyyah</i> (religious freedom)	<i>ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah</i> or <i>dawliyyah</i> (administrative or governmental freedom)	<i>ḥurriyyat ibdāʾ al-ʾārāʾ</i> (freedom of expressing opinions)	<i>ḥurriyyah madaniyyah</i> (civil freedom)	<i>ḥurriyyat al-madhāhib al-siyāsiyyah</i> (freedom of political doctrines)
<i>ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah</i> (behavioural freedom)	<i>ḥurriyyat al-dhimmah</i> (freedom of the People of the Book, i.e., Jews and Christians)	<i>ḥurriyyat al-milāḥah wa al-siyāḥah</i> (freedom to travel by sea and land)  <i>ḥurriyyat al-filāḥah wa al-tijārah wa al-ṣināʿah</i> (freedom of agriculture, trade, and industry)		<i>ḥuqūq madaniyyah</i> (civil rights), sometimes referred to as <i>ḥuqūq al-khuṣūṣiyyah</i> (private personal rights)	<i>ḥuqūq ʿumūmiyyah</i> (public rights)

Table 6.1: The semantic field of freedoms and rights in the first period





## CHAPTER SIX

### Analysis of the World View of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the First Period (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's Writings 1869-1873)

#### 6.0. Introduction

The main concern of this chapter is to analyse the conception of freedoms and rights in the first period, as seen in the texts of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī. The ultimate goal is to reach an understanding of the Egyptian world view of freedoms and rights in the first period, as represented in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings. To understand his world view, a "conceptual scheme" of his terms of freedoms and rights must be created (Izutsu, 1964/2008, p. 74). In order to do so, the analysis is organised as follows:

- A. Terms are categorised into sub-semantic fields according to the type of freedoms/rights to which they refer, so that their structure, as used in the texts, can be examined.
- B. The meaning of each term is identified by analysing the entitlements and limitations associated with it.

The main argument here is that the semantic field of the vocabularies used reflects how freedoms and rights were understood and developed.

This process demonstrates the orientation of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's view of freedoms and rights, making it possible to assess his actual contribution to introducing and developing ideas of freedoms and rights in Egypt.

#### 6.1. The semantic field of freedoms and rights in the first period

The terms of freedoms and rights found in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's texts can be categorised into six semantic fields reflecting the main types of freedom: personal, religious, economic, intellectual, social, and political (see Table 6.1). At first glance, the types of freedom in the sub-fields seem to cover the main categories of freedoms, in that each of them includes one or more terms. In fact, though, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's texts introduce a group of vocabularies of freedoms covering several

fields, and this undoubtedly demonstrates his lexical contribution (i.e., involving terms and expressions) to the vocabularies of freedoms and rights. But the question remains: do the categories provided by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī reflect a similar contribution at the semantic level?

In Chapter Four, it was explained that the meanings of terms of freedoms and rights are identified by semantic features pertaining to the entitlements, as well as the limitations, associated with each term.

Identifying these features requires an assessment of the actions and practices, as well as the restrictions that are intended when referring to each term. This will clearly illustrate what these freedoms and rights are actually meant to achieve for individuals, and what limitations are indicated at the conceptual level, not in the actual practices. Ultimately, the answers to these questions constitute the analysis of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's world view, and this is the focus of the next section.

To identify the semantic features of each term, the symbol (+) indicates entitlements, and (-) represents restrictions.

#### **6.1.1. The central term of freedom**

**Term 1:** *hurriyyah* (freedom)

- (+) The right of each individual to travel and to act freely on his own properties.
- (+) The right of each individual not to be punished without due legal process.
- (+) The right of each individual to express opinions.
- (-) That which is legally and/or politically prohibited in accordance with fundamental principles of justice in a fair state.<sup>38</sup>

#### **6.1.2. Terms of personal freedoms**

**Term 1:** *hurriyyah tab<sup>c</sup>iyyah* (instinctive freedom)

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<sup>38</sup> It should be noted that the restrictions provided by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī on the entitlements of freedom may be ambiguous and raise questions of what is politically fair and just.

- (+) The right to necessary personal actions pertaining to human nature, such as eating, drinking, moving, and managing one's time and personal possessions.
- (-) These actions must not harm oneself or others, as when someone eats harmful or stolen food, for example.

**Term 2:** hurriyyah sulūkiyyah (behavioural freedom)

- (+) The right of individuals to interact with others in ethical ways. (Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī did not establish a certain standard for ethical behaviour; instead, he referred to individual views and consciences as an acceptable standard.)
- (-) Non-ethical behaviour is prohibited.

### 6.1.3. Terms of religious freedoms

**Term 1:** hurriyyah dīniyyah (religious freedom)

- (+) The freedom for Muslims to practise Islam, within the accepted *Sunnī* schools of thought and doctrines only.
- (-) Non-Muslims and Muslims who are not *Sunnī* are not included in this specific type of religious freedom.

**Term 2:** hurriyyat al-dhimmah (freedom of People of the Book, i.e., Jews and Christians)

- (+) The freedom for non-Muslims to embrace and practise their religions within a Muslim state.
- (-) These practices should not undermine the system of the state.

### 6.1.4. Terms of economic freedoms

**Term 1:** hurriyyah siyāsiyyah or dawliyyah (administrative or governmental freedom)

- (+) The right of each individual to act legally with respect to his own possessions (e.g., estate, money, and businesses), according to his will.
- (-) One should not harm others.

**Term 2:** hurriyyat al-milāḥah wa al-siyāḥah (freedom to travel by sea and land)

- (+) The freedom of individuals to travel by land and sea in the interest of engaging in economic activities.

**Term 3:** hurriyyat al-filāḥah wa al-tijārah wa al-ṣināʿah (freedom of agriculture, trade, and industry)

- (+) The right of individuals to take part in economic activities in the fields of agriculture, trade, and industry.
- (-) One must have the proper qualifications and training.

#### **6.1.5. Terms of intellectual freedoms**

**Term 1:** hurriyyat ibdā' al-'ārā' (freedom of expressing opinions)

- (+) The right of intellectuals and learned people to express and publish their ideas and thoughts with respect to different disciplines, including law, philosophy, literature, and politics.
- (-) These ideas should not destabilise the government.

#### **6.1.6. Terms of social freedoms and rights**

**Term 1:** hurriyyah madaniyyah (civil freedom)

- (+) The social right of each individual to have his freedoms recognised by other individuals.

**Term 2:** huqūq madaniyyah (civil rights), sometimes referred to as huqūq khusūsiyyah shakhsiyyah (private personal rights)

- (+) The social responsibility to take into account one another's rights in legal and commercial transactions related to inheritance, marriage, contracts, and criminal and commercial jurisprudence.
- (-) There are no legal guarantees mentioned for these rights.

#### **6.1.7. Terms of political freedoms and rights**

**Term 1:** hurriyyat al-madhāhib al-siyāsiyyah (freedom of political doctrines)

- (+) The right of heads of state to rule and to formulate and enforce laws.

- (-) These laws and rules should be in accord with the country's legislation.
- (-) These laws and rules should be in rooted in justice and good political conduct.<sup>39</sup>

**Term 2:** *ḥuqūq ʿumūmiyyah* (public rights)

- (+) The rights of heads of state to absolute rule.

## 6.2. The world view of freedoms and rights in the first period

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's terms are of special importance as the first Arabic terms of freedoms and rights used with a modern 'political' meaning, and they make up a representative sample of how the idea of freedoms and rights was viewed by the intellectual elite during this early period.

It is interesting that the idea of personal freedom, which seems very obvious and essential to the current reader, is first introduced to the readers within a very confined vision, which may seem odd now. The analysis of the semantic features of the terms in Section 6.2 indicates that even the entitlements are greatly restricted, to the extent that some of these terms seem almost unrelated to the basic meaning of freedom, which involves free will to act (in accordance with a given legal system).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, who witnessed the French revolt against the monarchy in 1830 (a consequence of the French Revolution), had clearly studied a group of fundamental writings on philosophy, politics, and the French Charter of 1814. He understood freedom to mean the individual's right to act in accordance with legally accepted rules.

Accordingly, Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's definition of the central term of freedom – *ḥurriyyah* – expresses the modern political idea of personal freedom, which he articulates by introducing a group of legal rights and entitlements that allow people to act according to their own will, within the law. The pattern of restrictions that he provides includes a reference to religious law, *sharʿ*; another reference to the

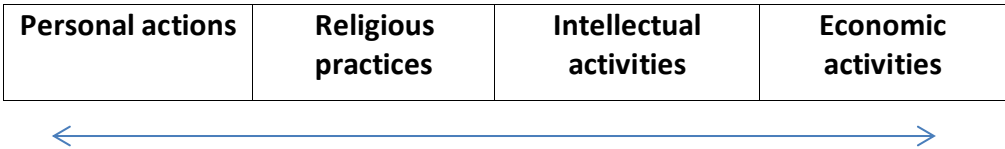
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<sup>39</sup> The text does not specify what is meant by "country's legislation", "good political conduct", or "justice".

political system, *siyāṣah*; and a third reference to the legal system: *qawānīn baladih* (laws of their country), although he does not actually mention any specific laws. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī seems to recognise the important idea that the rights of individuals should be guaranteed, albeit legally restricted, and he writes strategically about how to limit these entitlements. His explicit awareness of the curbs on freedom in an unfree state allows him, paradoxically, to write about freedom.

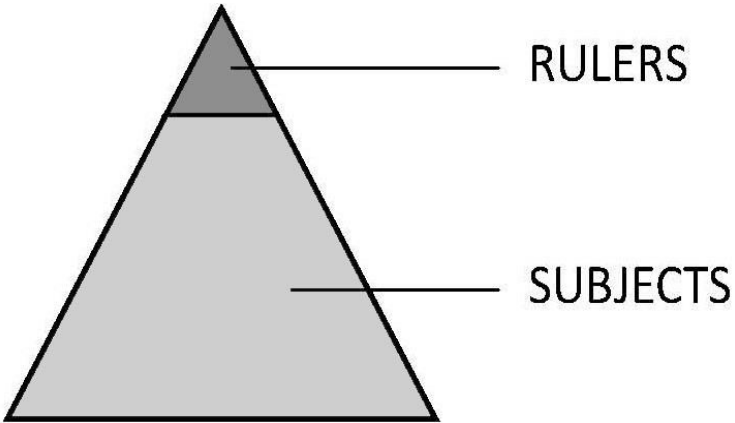
The semantic fields of freedoms and rights (see Table 6.1) suggest that they represent a culturally and politically restrictive view. The pattern found in the different types of freedoms and rights consists of two different types of relations:

(1) a group of qualitative terms concerning entitlements to practices and activities, in disciplines including religion, politics, economics, and others; these terms can be seen as equivalencies (i.e., ‘horizontally’ related) in that they all address activities that individuals can engage in.



**Figure 6.1: Types of entitlements referred to in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s terms of freedoms**

(2) terms expressing the rights of two different classes: a small number of rulers and a large number of ordinary people; they can be seen as vertically related, with two different levels of power.



**Figure 6.2: Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s terms of rights**

When one looks at the structure of the semantic field of freedoms and rights, the sub-fields (i.e., categories) indicate that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī understood the idea of freedom as a quality intended to enable people in both the public and private spheres, in activities ranging from political to economic. Yet the field of rights exposes a stratified view of rulers and subjects, one that cannot be related to

the idea of human rights because it emphasises and guarantees the privileges of absolute rulers, while it does not include any actual entitlements to others.

At the lexical level, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī produced a group of new lexical items intended to convey several types of freedom; hence, these items – at the semantic level – are very limited in term of entitlements. In many of the terms of freedoms, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī is neither referring to new rights nor seeking any form of legalisation; he simply describes types of actions that already exist and are allowed. He does provide systematic explanations, though, in an attempt to create a theoretical framework for discussing freedom in such a way that activities can be understood as new types of freedoms. This can be seen in the main five categories of freedoms. These terms refer to necessary, routine activities of everyday life (as in *ḥurriyyah ṭabʿiyyah* – instinctive freedom), activities that do not bother traditional political or cultural authorities (like *ḥurriyyah dīniyyah* – religious freedom); or permitting what is already accepted in the legal system of the government (as in *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* or *dawliyyah* – administrative or governmental freedom).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, therefore, can be seen as having emptied some terms (or concepts) of their actual content or meaning, inventing hollow new terms that do not reflect the principal idea, because he is resigned to suggesting only what is not controversial.

Self-censorship was not only political in nature; it was also derived from religious restrictions. Religion, as a main component of Arab culture, had deeply penetrated the social and political fabric. One manifestation of that penetration was that the intellectual elite, who engaged in debate and research in the humanities and spearheaded cultural movements that introduced new ideas to the public, had a traditional religious education and thus were more likely to have a restrictive view of rights. As the first group to have had direct interaction with Europe, they soon became the political thinkers who generated political ideas; later, they were involved in the debate over rights and freedoms.

An example of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's culturally restricted view is that religious freedom for Muslims allowed them to follow *Sunnī* doctrines only. This contradicts another view of his, where he argues for allowing people the right to behave ethically,

according to their own consciences – as in *ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah* (behavioural freedom) and *ḥurriyyah madaniyyah* (civil freedom).

When introducing other terms meant to entitle people to undertake actual actions or practices (that were not previously allowed), al-Ṭaḥṭāwī maintains a restricted educationalist attitude toward freedoms, arguing that only qualified people are eligible to enjoy these new practices. His conditions apply to those that require skills (i.e., economic freedoms enabling people to engage in various economic activities) or that might have an influence on the public (e.g., intellectual freedoms which involved spreading ideas publicly). This is, in fact, a fundamental distinction between al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's vision of freedom and the European version that he observed in French literature and in the making of the French Constitution. Although all freedoms and human rights are constrained to some degree by history and culture, the European view provides a broader ethical scope, whereas the ethical system in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's vision is based on conservative educationalist perspectives. These perspectives emphasise the public interests of the nation, which naturally implies a political commitment and constraint.

In all cases, the idea of building entitlements into the law seems to be completely absent or ignored. He did not suggest a system of law to guarantee entitlements; he was only interested in an initial articulation of freedoms and rights as a basis for further development of these concepts.

Instead, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī employed some of his terms of freedom to convey concepts to do with public awareness of freedom. For example, the terms *ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah* (behavioural freedom) and *ḥurriyyah madaniyyah* (civil freedom) do not refer to entitlements. They refer to the individual's duty to respect others' rights to act as they wish, and to encourage others to practise and enjoy this right, provided that they are committed to ethical behaviours.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī sets out a view of freedom that is subject to both external and personal limitations. When he first introduces the (new) idea of personal freedom, his definition of the central terms of freedom reflects an awareness of the basic structure of the idea of freedom. At the same time, this view is not reflected in other terms of freedom, which either seem emptied of the basic idea



of freedom or are not legally guaranteed and are totally absent in the terms covering types of rights.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's vision of freedom was the subject of many critiques, some negative and some complimentary. The historian al-Rāfi<sup>ḥ</sup>, praised his writings, saying "that they have the stamp of contemporary constitutional principles and that they are in harmony with the spirit of freedom and democracy" (as cited in Zolondek, 1964, p. 90). Nuseibeh also believed that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī:

sought to make this tradition [i.e., the French political tradition] palatable to his contemporaries by showing that its ideas were in essential in harmony with those of the Arab tradition (as cited in Zolondek, 1964, p. 90).

Zolondek (1964) criticises these assessments as overly complimentary; he states that "these evaluations do not coincide with al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's basic views" (p.91). Moreover, Newman (2011) contends that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī should not be seen as a 'liberal' because he interprets the notion of freedom in *Takhlīṣ al-labrīz* as an equivalent of justice and equity, as if they are "two cornerstones in Islamic political theory, rather than the way in which he saw it in practice in France" (p. 93).

Others have characterised him as enlightened and who is "the missionary for the democratic-liberal thought throughout the Eastern countries, which have been accustomed to absolute rule for a long time" (ʿAmārah, 2009, p. 239). This position, in the view of ʿAmārah (2009), allowed him to use various expressions and phrases to satisfy this contradiction. This is an argument used repeatedly to justify why al-Ṭaḥṭāwī consistently restricts the scope of the entitlements to which he referred. Like all historical writing, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's contribution should be understood in the context of the time. He should not be labelled 'liberal' or 'pro-government' because his ideas in the texts vary according to the considerations previously discussed.

A semantic approach is crucial to addressing cultural concepts because it enables accurate identification of the components of each term, so as to organise a scheme with which to assess his contribution. One may conclude that not only the general Arab reader, but also political Arab thinkers such as al-Ṭaḥṭāwī himself, were taking the concept of freedom and reproducing it in a

culturally confined context. Although he understood and experienced freedom in Paris, he was facing a different challenge in a different cultural context. These new ideas of what freedom should refer to, and how it should be constituted, were not in line with what he knew. They were debated later, but he himself seems not to have been able to contribute to these discussions for two reasons: at the time, he was constrained from speaking freely, and the concepts were new and unfamiliar to the public.

As a result, his contribution at the conceptual level was limited. At the lexical level, though, he made an important contribution by producing a number of terms covering several types of freedom in different fields. It was a challenge for him to provide a systematic view of human rights within a highly restricted context. His work provided a foundation for other novel and more unfamiliar definitions of freedom, which al-Ṭaḥṭāwī himself was unable to deal with. The literate Arab public had to be prepared to accept other types of freedoms, or to understand freedom in a new light, but this process was to occur incrementally. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's contribution paved the way for a public debate around human rights concepts, although he himself was unable to take part due to political restrictions.

In conclusion, the main features of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's world view may be summarised in the following features:

- Everyone should have rights, which should be specified by law.
- Individuals should have the right to act according to their conscience in both the private and public sphere, and to engage in political, economic and social activities.
- The legal system should have restrictions tailored to the culture, to reflect an ethical system inspired by religious and politically restrictive views.
- Individuals are responsible for establishing public awareness of personal rights, by acknowledging personal freedom. This was expected to lead to greater debate, which in turn would lead to the enjoyment of greater actual freedom.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Discussion of Terms of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Second Period (Political Articles 1879-1918)

#### 7.0. Introduction

This chapter addresses the second stage of the chronological investigation of the vocabularies of freedoms and rights. The terms of freedoms and rights are examined in a representative sample of political articles published between 1879 (the year that witnessed the beginning of the ʿUrābī Revolution) and 1918 (the year prior to the Revolution of 1919). The texts consulted are taken from two sources:

- political articles of Muḥammad ʿAbduḥ, published in *Al-Waqāʾiʿ* newspaper between 1880 and 1882, and
- political articles published in *Al-Ahrām* newspaper at different times between 1879 and 1918.<sup>40</sup>

In the following sections, the terms of freedoms and rights found in these articles are discussed in the same manner that was applied in Chapter Five. This allows tracing of the semantic changes involved, as well as understanding the perceptions of freedoms and rights in this second period.

#### 7.1. The cultural context of ʿAbduḥ’s and *Al-Ahrām*’s political articles in the second period<sup>41</sup>

The time of Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha (r. 1805-1848) was a period of establishing a new state and a period of renaissance. The army and navy were established,

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<sup>40</sup> It was intended that the second period to be analysed would cover the period directly after al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s, but due to a lack of relevant articles published in that period, the decision was taken to consider the ʿUrābī Revolution (1879-1882) as the starting point for the second period.

<sup>41</sup> The historical events mentioned in this overview are taken from al-Rāfiʿī (1937/1983a, 1932/1987a, 1932/1987b) unless noted otherwise. Chapter Three provided an overview of the geopolitical context, including political events as well as other cultural factors that may have influenced the understanding of the terms of freedoms and rights.

as were the cultural and educational foundations of the state and the institutional bases of economic life. In contrast, the era of his successor, ʿAbbās Pasha (r. 1848-1854) was described as a period of reaction and decline as institutions that had been previously established under Muḥammad ʿAlī became dormant. The insular character of ʿAbbās, as well as his exclusion of the European experts hired previously by Muḥammad ʿAlī for development and institutional reforms, was among the main reasons behind this decline.

Saʿīd Pasha (r. 1854-1863), on the other hand, reinstituted some economic reforms that had previously been discontinued; he reformed tax policies, encouraged construction, and broke up the monopolisation of some sectors. The judicial system and transportation infrastructure were also improved. To foster positive feelings among the public, Saʿīd Pasha directed the army to be seen as taking part in these reforms.

The next ruler, Ismāʿīl Pasha (r. 1863-1879), had embraced European civilisation while studying in France. After returning to Egypt, he tried to recreate the opera houses, palaces and promenades, in addition to building other modern institutions. The transportation system between Egypt and Sudan was expanded, making possible increased trade among Sudan, Egypt and European countries. Improvements in infrastructure, as well as a welcoming atmosphere towards Western attitudes and customs, made Egypt attractive to foreign companies.

Ismāʿīl Pasha developed educational and intellectual institutions, including professional schools, institutes, and professional societies; he also set up scholarships to Europe. All these factors contributed to the formation of a new generation of educated people, who later became intellectuals concerned with debates over political ideas and practices. Yet a traditional approach to education remained, and “the whole system [of education] remained centrally directed in every respect” (Safran, 1981, p. 35). The educated elite tended to work as government employees; as such, they were not in a position to make objective assessments or to openly criticise the government or its actions. Moreover, the ideas and concepts of political rights, and their relation to democracy, were not clearly recognised (Vatikiotis, 1991, pp. 122, 124-125).

One remarkable political achievement for Ismāʿīl Pasha was the 1866 establishment of the *Majlis Shūrā al-Nuwwāb* (the Consultative Assembly of Delegates). The seventy-five members of the council were elected, but the existence of this board did not diminish the ruler's absolute power because it had no actual authority, and its members were consulted only on internal affairs. In the words of Safran (1981), "Ismāʿīl had set up a consultative representative assembly as a showpiece in imitation of civilized governments" (p. 37). Eventually, however, due to the deterioration of the financial situation, pressure from the national elite, and the weakness of government institutions, the Consultative Assembly of Delegates were aroused "to claim a real voice in the affairs of the government" (p.37).

Ismāʿīl's measures were hugely expensive, and the crippling debts forced the government to take loans from Europe. This opened the door to interference by the creditor nations in the economic and political affairs, and this in turn led to a worsening of Egypt's financial circumstances.

The foreign intervention also contributed to a change in social conditions, values and economic opportunities. The economic activities and business projects were dominated by Westerners, most of whom took up residence in the country. Their presence introduced a new, Western-influenced lifestyle, as well as other, different phenomena in Egypt's social life. The new social and political reality in the country concerned Egyptian intellectuals, who reacted by discussing and debating these changes and their social implications. Many saw this new reality as a cultural invasion and attempted to resist it. Some responded by translating Western political books, and others published their social and political views in newspapers; among those writers was Muḥammad ʿAbduh, whose articles were published in *Al-Waqāʿ* newspaper between 1880 and 1882, and Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid in *Al-Jarīdah* newspaper. Both of them discussed the social and political concerns of Egyptian society at that time (Aḥmad, 2012, pp. 46-48).

After the British and French had Ismāʿīl Pasha removed in 1879, his son Tawfīq Pasha was installed as the new ruler. The ʿUrābī Revolution, which began as a military revolt and then expanded into a public revolution against absolute rule and foreign intervention in the country, was a distinct turning point in the political

reality of Egypt at that time. This conversation between Colonel Aḥmad ʿUrābī and Khedive Tawfīq Pasha at the peak of the conflict, during protests by military officers on 9 September 1881, indicates a significant change in concepts and thoughts of freedoms and rights, and this justifies the selection of the ʿUrābī Revolution as a critical point of this research.

Khedive Tawfīq Pasha: You have no rights to any of these demands; I am the Khedive of the country, and I do whatever I wish.

ʿUrābī: We are not enslaved, and we will never again be inherited (al-Rāfiʿī, 1937/1983a, p. 126).

The ʿUrābī Revolution ended with the British occupation of the country in 1882, but at one stage it had achieved some of its national demands, including the establishment of an elected parliament and a constitution. During the British occupation, that constitutional system was disbanded. This affected the national attitude and was reflected in the opposition movement and political life in general. Al-Rāfiʿī (1942/1983b) states:

The press during the opposition was either in favour of the occupation or opposed to it based on fears of being appropriated. *Al-Ahrām* and *Al-Waṭan* newspapers tended to take this path of opposition (p. 184).

All of these factors clearly impacted the availability of political articles that could be published, including those involving vocabularies of human rights. During the period of occupation, the prevailing notion was freedom in the sense of promoting national independence, rather than any sub-categories of individual freedoms.

In the meantime, the political ideas and institutions that were spreading in Europe and Turkey were being reported in the newspapers. The national elite were undoubtedly aware of these ideas and their application in political life and

practices in other parts of the world, and this fuelled their ambitions to apply them in their own country.<sup>42</sup>

## 7.2. The vocabularies of freedoms and rights in the political articles of the second period

### 7.2.1. Terms of personal freedoms and rights

**Term 1:** *hurriyyat al-ashkhāṣ al-siyāsiyyah* (political freedom of individuals)

#### Text

[...] <sup>43</sup> حرية الأشخاص التي هي نوع البحث الثاني، فقد أطلقت محافظة دنقلة للقاضي الشرعي اليد [ومنحته] <sup>44</sup> سلطة تشريعية يسن [...] <sup>45</sup>

وأما لوائح القاضي فهي منع كل عوائد البلاد من ختان البنات ووشم الشفتين. ولا يجهل أحد أن ليس من وظيفة الحكومة المداخلة في أمر ختان النسوة ووشم الشفتين وإبطال سائر عوائدهن وفرض عقوبة الجلد والحبس والغرامة على من مارس شيئاً من هذه العادات التي تستهجنها حكومتهم المتمدنة.

وأعجب من هذا وذلك ما سمعناه حديثاً من أن القاضي الشرعي سن قانوناً يقضي بمنع كل فتاة من الزواج إذا كان سنها دون الخمس والعشرين سنة.

ويدخل في حرية الأشخاص: إقامة المحاكم العادلة، والجري على الدستور المعتدل، بالأخذ بأوسط الأمور مثلما يفعل القانون المصري.

(Al-Ḥurriyyah fī madīnat Dunqulah, 1879)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

[...] Political freedom of individuals is the second type of freedom discussed in this article. The governor of Dongola authorised the official judge to enact [...]

These regulations prevent certain customs of the country, such as tattooing lips and female circumcision. No one is unaware that it is not a function of the government to intervene in these matters and to prevent women from practising these customs, and to impose a

<sup>42</sup> In searching through the relevant data (by browsing hundreds of pages of *Al-Ahrām*), I came across news relevant to the movements of freedoms and rights in Europe and Turkey at that time, including constitutional articles, parliamentary decisions and activities involving civil demands; these reports included terms such as *ḥuqūq al-nisā'* (women's rights), *ḥurriyyah shakhshiyyah* (personal freedom), and others.

<sup>43</sup> This marks a two-word space where the type is unintelligible.

<sup>44</sup> The word is unclear.

<sup>45</sup> The rest of the paragraph is readable.

penalty of imprisonment, fines, and flogging on those who practise any of these practices that are disapproved of by the civilised government.

It is even more puzzling what we have recently heard, in that the judge enacted a law that forbids girls from marrying if they are under twenty-five years old ...

The freedom of individuals includes the establishment of a just judiciary, the application of a moderate constitution with a preference for taking the most moderate approach, just as the Egyptian legal system does.

### **Cultural and linguistic context<sup>46</sup>**

The article was published in *Al-Ahrām* on 21 July 1879, under the title *Al-Ḥurriyyah fī madīnat Dunqulah* [The freedom in Dongola city], concerning a Sudanese governorate under British occupation. The writer (who is not identified)<sup>47</sup> discusses what he calls “two types of freedoms”: *ḥurriyyat al-ashkhāṣ al-siyāsiyyah* (political freedom of individuals), and *ḥurriyyat al-ariqqā'* (freedom of slaves). Remarkably, he has contradictory points of view on the freedom of individuals. On the one hand, he rails against regulations that prevent people from practising their personal freedoms; on the other, he defends the slave trade and strongly opposes any regulations that would prevent it.

These regulations were enacted by the British-appointed official judge of Dongola.<sup>48</sup> At that time, Dongola was subject to military rule; thus the regulations were issued by the British general ruling the region. These regulations included legal prohibitions and punishments for practising what the

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<sup>46</sup> The historical events mentioned in the ‘cultural and linguistic context’ sections for the terms in this chapter are mainly taken from al-Rāfiʿī (1937/1983a, 1942/1983b, 1932/1987b), unless mentioned otherwise.

<sup>47</sup> Although the writer is not named, and the article discusses issues in Sudan, I have included it because these issues clearly had implications for the social and economic realities in neighbouring Egypt and because of the relevance of the terms. At the conceptual level, the article includes terms that reveal how the concept of freedom was understood by Egyptian writers, one of whom may very well have been the anonymous author.

<sup>48</sup> I have not found details on the judiciary system in Sudan at that period. Clearly, the context of the article shows that the country is under military rule of the British occupation (al-Qaddāl, 1993; Rizq, 1976).



writer describes as the “customs of the country”, such as female matters related to tattooing, circumcision, and the appropriate age of marriage.

According to the writer, the legal authorities disapprove of these cultural customs simply because they are not consistent with their own culture. He argues that this violates the personal (or as he refers to it, political) freedom of individuals. Furthermore, he states that the personal freedom of individuals must be protected from mistreatment by legal authorities and that this can be achieved by setting up fair courts that take balanced and reasonable decisions.

Interestingly, the writer uses the same argument to rationalise continuing the slave trade in Sudan. Offering what might be viewed as utilitarian reasons in support of his stance, he opposes any laws preventing slavery and even urges the government to refrain from applying existing regulations. He emphasises the poor economic and financial situation in Sudan, stating that occupations that pay enough to earn a living are not available. Since poor workers in the region could not afford maids or labourers to help them with agricultural work, they used slaves. He argues that prohibiting slavery was abhorrent because it would put a financial burden on poor people and block them from having workers, which would in turn affect their earnings and incite them to revolt against the government.

The writer expresses doubts about the moral motivations of the occupying government who enacted this law, suggesting that they did so for political rather than ethical reasons. As evidence, he reviews the history of what he calls moral enslavement – *al-istirqāq al-adabī* – of the Eastern nations by these occupying governments. In opposing anti-slavery laws, he insists (in the same article, but after the text excerpted above) that “people do not understand the meaning of freedom”.

In discussing individuals other than slaves, the writer demonstrates an understanding of the idea of personal freedom, contending that it requires legal entitlements which can only be guaranteed when just courts and a constitution are established. This same insight, however, is lacking in his views concerning slaves. Here he seems self-interested, or maybe materialistic, placing economic freedom above the freedom of enslaved individuals – or perhaps he considers slavery a part of the social structure of his country and thus partly a historical-

cultural norm; if so, he confuses cultural traditions with freedom from harm for some. The concept of freedom may have been an ambitious one for the writer himself.

The foreign occupation is one of the most influential factors that contributed to a distorted perspective of personal freedoms, one in which people who are already suffering from occupation and difficult economic conditions are prevented from exercising their freedoms and rights as they face regulations from the same authority that constrains their freedoms. At the same time, the regime supports other types of freedom that have consequences for everyday life, but according to a particular version of ethics. The writer disputes the occupation government's ethical claims in a way that shows he is aware of the gap between claims of freedom and its actual practice. This complicated situation is reflected in his views on freedom, and this clearly demonstrates how the occupation contributed to distorting concepts of freedom, along with people's attitudes toward them.

### **Discussion of the term**

The term *ḥurriyyat al-ashkhāṣ al-siyāsiyyah* (the political freedom of individuals) refers to the freedom to practise cultural habits and personal traditions without intervention from legal or political authorities. The author states that the exercise of individual freedoms depends on a constitution and a fair court system. This implies that he understands that this type of freedom must include legal rights to guard against legally sanctioned mistreatment.

The reference to politics in this term may refer merely to the writer's understanding of the personal freedom of individuals as being authorised and given by the political authorities. It may also signify the political authority's (i.e., foreign occupation's) control over people, to the extent that their personal actions are described as 'political'. In any case, it shows that, unavoidably, "the personal is political".

The second term, *ḥurriyyat al-ariqqā'* (the freedom of slaves), is intended to refer to the freedom of a specific class of people; this is consistent with the classical meaning of freedom in Arabic, which is simply the opposite of

enslavement. It is worth noting that this classical meaning is political itself because owning slaves is always political.

**Term 2: *ḥuqūq ṭabīʿiyyah* (natural rights)**

**Text**

فكان جرثومة تقدمهم أمراً مُنبئاً في غالب الأفراد، ومُحرزاً في أغلب العقول، وهو نشاط الأهالي في اجتلاب الثروة وطلبهم لحرية العمل ليناولها ورفضهم لتلك التقييدات التي كانت تمنعهم من طلب حقوقهم الطبيعية.

(<sup>°</sup>Abduh: *Al-Waqāʾiʿ*, 7/4/1881, as cited in <sup>°</sup>Abduh, 1993, p. 328)<sup>49</sup>

**Translation [translated by the researcher]**

The origin of their progress, indeed, refers to what most individuals recognise and observe, the drive toward accumulating wealth, and the demand for the freedom to work in order to realise this objective, and their rejection of such limitations that had prevented them from demanding their natural rights.

**Cultural and linguistic context**

It must be noted that another part of this same article is quoted, translated, and discussed below under economic freedoms, in Section 7.2.2 (Term 1, the second text), and the cultural and linguistic context for the term *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* (freedom of work), which is mentioned in this text, is discussed there. The writer mentions *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* (freedom of work) here without defining it, but the term *ḥuqūq ṭabīʿiyyah* (natural rights) cannot be understood completely without also considering the meaning and context of the term *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* (freedom of work).

This text is from an article in a series entitled *Kalām fī khaṭaʾ al-ʿuqalāʾ* [Discussion on the mistake of the wise men], published in *Al-Waqāʾiʿ* on 7 April 1881, in which <sup>°</sup>Abduh discusses and criticises social phenomena that are considered to be caused by Egyptians' interaction with Westerners, i.e., the

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<sup>49</sup> <sup>°</sup>Abduh's articles are cited from a compilation of his works entitled *Al-Aʿmāl al-kāmilah lil-imām al-shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, edited by M. ʿAmārah (see <sup>°</sup>Abduh, 1993). I have added the date to the standard citation, since this information might be helpful for putting the articles in context.

Europeanised style of government and foreign intrusion into the country's affairs.

### Discussion of the term

The term *ḥuqūq ṭabīʿiyyah* (natural rights) is mentioned in this article in conjunction with the term *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* (freedom of work), which is clearly related to people's efforts to earn a living. In this context, *ḥuqūq ṭabīʿiyyah* refers to actions involving work and livelihood; these are normally related to means of securing the necessities of life. They clearly define a range of actions and activities that vary over time and across cultures.

According to the text, this includes economic activities as well as related actions such as movement and travel, legal acts pertaining to property, and so on. This can clearly be seen as a semantic extension of the term *ḥurriyyah ṭabīʿiyyah* (instinctive freedom), which, in the texts of the first period, referred to necessary biological actions of human nature such as eating, drinking, and walking.

Although the term *ḥuqūq ṭabīʿiyyah* (natural rights) is mentioned in the context of the situation in Europe at a particular time, the writer takes this concept from another culture and adapts it to introduce the Arabic reader to a particular version of rights. This expansion of what is entailed by the term *ḥuqūq ṭabīʿiyyah* clearly reflects a hierarchical development of people's needs. In the previous period, the entitlements were mainly of a 'biological' nature, whereas in this text, they involve social life and its interactions.

This development is consistent with ʿAbduh's view of the progression of people in gaining their political rights. In an article entitled *Al-Ḥayāt al-siyāsiyyah* [Political life], published on 9 November (ʿAbduh: *Al-Waqāʿ*, 9/11/1881, as cited in M. ʿAbduh 1993, pp. 363-371), he states that humans are born with fundamental basic needs of a biological nature; they try to ensure life and self-preservation by seeking help from, and interacting with, other human beings in society, so as to become civilised. People are then motivated – by the need to develop the society, organise their affairs, and achieve their basic requirements – to be political and engaged through interaction (as cited in ʿAbduh, 1993, pp. 365-366).

### **Term 3: *hurriyyat al-tafannun* (freedom of artistic work)**

#### **Text**

تري محلات الفجور عامرة، ومحلات الميسر مستعدة لنهب أموال الأشخاص عديمي التدبر والدراية، كذلك تجد محلات الزار؛ وما أدراك ما العار، وبئس الشنار، الذي ما أنزل الله به من سلطان بل حرمه القرآن. وقد أطلقت حرية التفنن حتى أن المصريين اجترعن هذه الآفة على النساء.

(Ṣabrī, 1903)

#### **Translation [translated by the researcher]**

You will find brothels prospering, and gambling houses ready to rob those who lack forethought and experience. Also you will find houses of ill-repute, the shame and disgrace of which is impossible to describe or quantify, and which God has not decreed to be lawful but rather forbidden in the Qur'ān. Freedom of artistic work was then allowed to spread without check, until Egyptian women were compelled to consume this immorality.

#### **Cultural and linguistic context**

Under the British occupation, many aspects of social life, in addition to political and economic life, had deteriorated. For one thing, after 1884, schools began imposing fees. The majority of Egyptians were in the lower social classes, made up of labourers and farmers, and since they could not afford to send their children to school, illiteracy spread among the poor. No new schools were opened, and many existing schools remained closed. In those schools that were open, English became the main language of education after Year Three, so English teachers gradually replaced Egyptians.

At the same time, many educated and upper class citizens developed a self-interested attitude, for they were busy achieving personal benefits rather than worrying about the nation's interests. People neglected to improve the society by spreading ethical values, standards and culture, and this was reflected in their manners. Since the law allowed usury, liquor, gambling and prostitution (Ḥatātah, 1983, pp. 160-161), people had the 'personal freedom' to engage in all these behaviours, which led to increasing 'corruptions of morals'.

Mustāfā Ṣabrī (d. 1954), in an article in *Al-Ahrām* on 21 August 1903, entitled *Istibdād al-būlīs fī Miṣr* [Tyranny of the police in Egypt], criticised the incompetence and injustice of the police, pointing out how this affected other aspects of social and economic life. Ṣabrī, a scholar and political activist with an Islamic ideology, was Turkish; nevertheless, he contributed to Egyptian political and intellectual life by writing newspaper articles about social and political issues, and his article is relevant to this discussion.

The text refers to different practices that people engage in, and it mentions the places of such activities, such as *maḥallāt al-maysir* (houses of gambling) and *maḥallāt al-fujūr* (houses of profligacy), without ever actually using the term for prostitution. He criticises the social phenomena of ‘immoral’ activities and practices, and he mentions that these habits are exercised in ‘places’, so the connection that he makes between ‘houses of gambling’ and ‘houses of profligacy’ implies that he is referring to practices of ill-repute that are considered vices in Islamic culture: gambling, drunkenness, and prostitution.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, the writer utilises vocabularies of shame and vice (such as: *‘ār* and *shanār*), as well as expressions showing that the Qur’ān forbids these practices. Along with everything else, the fact that he mentions Egyptian women being involved in this ‘vice’ leads us to conclude that he is referring to prostitution when he uses the term *ḥurriyyat al-tafannun* (freedom of artistic work). This may indicate that women involved in this ‘profession’ were dancers or singers, because women in these professions were often (sometimes unfairly) linked to prostitution.

### Discussion of the term

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<sup>50</sup> This is what Ḥabduh has criticised in his article (*Al-Waqā’i’*:1881, April 4, as cited in Abduh, 1993, pp. 332-333). In his words:

Thus, people rushed to go at [it] with full appetites; they violated the sanctity of solemnity, and [they were] worn out drinking inebriants in this hot country, to an extent which Europeans, in their cold countries, had not come to. Therefore, barrooms and storage of alcohol – the drink which destroys minds as well as bodies – increased. Thereupon, they became attached to what followed drunkenness: diversion and playful amusement. They also competed to gain the favour of prostitutes[...] And whenever you try to prevent them, or express repulsion at such behaviours, an infatuated [one] will say: ‘This is freedom!’ Thus, respect for morals was lost, and the value of nobleness and dignity decayed.

Both Ṣabrī’s and Ḥabduh’s articles describe what they see as a ‘corruption in morals’ and how people are involved in ‘bad behaviours’.

Whatever the reason for using this term, the term *hurriyyat al-tafannun* (freedom of artistic work) refers to prostitution as a legal ‘profession’ allowed by the government. The writer, who criticises this authorisation and discusses its negative impact on society, refers to prostitution as a practice that is unethical and religiously forbidden. The term invokes a less negative connotative meaning of prostitution, and in contrast, a more negative and less valued meaning of freedom, when it is linked with these practices. It might seem surprising that a religious scholar uses a less negative term for these practices, but this indicates that they were allowed within the society and seen as ‘freedoms’. This demonstrates that while so-called ‘personal’ freedoms were allowed by the unelected government, freedom involving public matters was prevented or restricted.

### 7.2.2. Terms of economic freedoms

**Term 1:** *hurriyyat al-ʿamal* (freedom of work)

#### First text

فَرَّغَ هذا الرئيس الجليل رغبة حقيقية في تأييد حرية العمل في هذه البلاد، ورفع سوط القسوة الغير القانونية، وإبطال عمله بالكلية، إذ لم يجعل لأحد من المأمورين سلطة على أحد من الأهالي إلا فيما يعود على البلاد بالمنفعة العامة، كما هو شأن العدالة وحقيقة النظام.

(ʿAbduh: *Al-Waqāʾiʿ*, 31/10/1880, as cited in ʿAbduh, 1993, p. 304-305)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

This great Prime Minister [Riyāḍ Pasha] had a real desire to support the freedom of work in this country, and to remove and completely stop illegal acts of cruelty. He did not grant any government officers any power over inhabitants except that which would benefit the public, and this falls within the purview of justice and the reality of the system.

#### Cultural and linguistic context

In the time of Khedive Ismāʿīl (r. 1863-1879), labourers worked under oppressive conditions. They were regularly flogged to make them pay taxes, and they were forced to work, without pay, on government construction projects (e.g., building bridges, canals, etc.). There was nothing to stop the rulers from

abusing the poor; no one and no laws protected them, and the abuses they suffered were not reported.

At the time of Khedive Tawfīq (r. 1879-1892), Riyāḍ Pasha was appointed Prime Minister (r. 1879-1881) after the dismissal of the keenly ambitious Sharīf Pasha (r. 1879). There was a consultative government and a Consultative Assembly of Delegates, and support for that assembly was expanded at the instigation of the British and the French, who supported Riyāḍ Pasha (although Riyāḍ Pasha himself supported the khedive in his policies of absolute rule and acceptance of foreign intervention). Administratively, his government achieved a number of things, including the prohibition of forced labour in government construction and the nationalisation of Ismāʿīl's palaces. People were given the right to decline to work on government construction projects if they paid the government, and tax collectors were prevented from flogging people.

In this article, ʿAbduh discusses the importance of the rule of law for ushering in progress. He points out that this can be achieved only if the laws are respected and obeyed by the rulers themselves, and he praises the government's new rules, pronouncing them in keeping with the freedoms associated with labour.

Although the writer does not explain what the term *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* is intended to mean, he provides examples of some actions and practices that are opposed to the rights of workers. ʿAbduh then states that the new Prime Minister supports *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* (freedom of work), and he gives examples of actions that he took.

### **Discussion of the term**

The term *ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal* refers to the dignity of labourers, which protects them from being treated as slaves. In this text, it does not refer to freedom or rights that permitted labourers to *do* certain actions; instead, it refers to freedom *from* actions that humiliated the labourers and made them the subjects of others. This can be understood as a negative freedom (Carter, 2016).

This text and the term clearly indicate the level of rights or freedoms that labourers at that time were, in theory, able to claim.



## Second text

إن بداية التقدم الأوروبي في الحقيقة كان في نفوس الأهالي وأفراد الرعايا، علمتهم الحروب الصليبية سير البر والبحر، وخالطوا فيها الأمم الشرقية أجيالاً، وطمحت أنظارهم لمغالبتهم، فدققوا في سبب قوة الشرقيين –التي كانت لهم إذ ذاك– وبحثوا في أحوالهم فرأوا لهم عادات جميلة، وفيما بينهم أفكار سامية، ورأوا في دوائر أعمالهم اتساعاً، وأيدي الصناعة والاكتساب مطلقة الحرية، ولذلك كان الغنى والعز مستوكراً أقطارهم، فأخذ أهالي أوروبا عند ذلك تقليدهم، لكن لا في البهارج والزخارف، بل في أسبابها والموصلات إليها، وهي: توسيع نطاق الصناعة والتجارة ونحوهما من وجوه الكسب.

فكان جرثومة تقدمهم أمراً مُنبئاً في غالب الأفراد، ومُحرزاً في أغلب العقول، وهو: نشاط الأهالي في اجتلاب الثروة وطلبهم لحرية العمل.

(<sup>°</sup>Abduh: *Al-Waqā'if*, 7/4/1881, as cited in <sup>°</sup>Abduh, 1993, pp. 327-328)

### Translation [translated by the researcher]

Indeed, the origin of European progress stemmed from the individuals themselves. They learned from the Crusade Wars, travelling by land and by sea; they interacted with Eastern nations across several generations, and they aspired to dominate. Then they observed the factors of their counterparts' domination at that time, and sought to attain its conditions. They found that the Easterners enjoyed good customs and fine ideas; they found that the scope of their work and occupations had expanded, and that they were free to engage in vocations as well as ways of freely earning. For this reason, affluence and well-being were rooted in their countries. The Europeans then started to imitate the root causes of the Easterners' success, rather than imitating the superficial features thereof; hence they expanded the scope of manufacturing and trade, besides various others means of earning.

The origin of their progress, indeed, refers to what most individuals recognise and observe; that is, the drive to accumulate wealth, and the demand for the freedom to work.

## Cultural and linguistic context

In one of a series of three articles entitled *Kalām fī khaṭa' al-<sup>°</sup>uqalā'* [Discussion of the mistake of the wise men], published in *Al-Waqā'if* newspaper on 7 April 1881, <sup>°</sup>Abduh discusses and criticises certain social phenomena in Egyptian society, which include behaviours considered to be the result of Western influence.

°Abduh does not criticise the values and codes of European civilisation themselves, but rather the way these ideas were transforming Egyptian society. He argues that the core of a nation's civilisation involves economic liberty, and that Western civilisation had learned of the value of economic freedom (and other values that were subsequently transformed and adopted) through its interaction with Eastern civilisation during the Crusades. This text also implies that the transfer of ideas was reciprocal, with Eastern civilisation also being transformed by Western values.

As mentioned earlier, economic liberties in Egypt came gradually, as the monopoly on trade in Egypt crumbled gradually, beginning in 1841. After the treaty signed in 1838 between the Ottoman Empire and the United Kingdom, trade policies changed towards an open market, and agreements were enacted over time (see 5.2.4). However, foreign investments in Egypt were temporarily interrupted in 1882, due to a lack of appropriate conditions as a result of the political circumstances of occupation.

It is worth noting that this article was published before the peak of the °Urābī Revolution (on 9 September 1881), which marked a transformation in the writer's attitude towards politics and social reform. Prior to the revolution, he showed an educator's concern with social reform, emphasising the role of education as the main means of qualifying the average person for freedoms and rights.

°Abduh was always critical of the revolutionary approach, in which change occurred suddenly through the exertion of political power. This resulted in importing the 'externals' of Western civilisation, such as its norms and customs, with a consequent 'corruption of morals'. This, in turn, opened the door to all types of personal behaviours, regardless of morality, without establishing the necessary legal restrictions to protect people's rights and values, or educating people about practising their personal freedoms in a responsible way. Instead, argues °Abduh, the country should move forward by adopting economic liberty as the main factor of social change and development.

This article may signal his open-mindedness towards Western customs and his acknowledgement that cultural interaction is an important means of transferring values; on the other hand, it may be the opposite, demonstrating his resistance

to Western values. This resistance is a result of opposition by Egyptian intellectuals, especially those who espouse an Islamic ideology, to European political intervention in the country. It reflects the belief that European civilisation has applied its experiences to the customs of Eastern civilisation, such as the concept of economic liberty.

### Discussion of the term

°Abduh uses the term *ḥurriyyat al-°amal* (freedom of work) to refer to al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's concepts of economic liberty, the main factors of which are wealth, well-being and civilisation. Both al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and °Abduh refer to this type of economic freedom as the freedom of individuals to travel for the purpose of engaging in economic activities in different fields. They both use historical evidence to prove that this type of freedom has always been a source of civilisation.

#### 7.2.3. Terms of intellectual freedoms

**Terms 1-5:** *ḥurriyyat al-afkār* (freedom of thought), (*ḥurriyyat al-aqwāl* (freedom of speech), *ḥurriyyat al-a°māl* (freedom of actions), *ḥurriyyat al-majāmi°* (freedom of academies),<sup>51</sup> *ḥurriyyat al-matābi°* (freedom of the press)

#### Text

وإن تمام التربية وكمال التعليم، وترتب الفائدة المطلوبة عليهما، لا يكون إلا بإطلاق حرية الأفكار والأقوال والأعمال، حتى لا يخاف الإنسان ملامة ولا عقاباً في الاشتغال بالعلوم التي تقتف العقل وتوسع دائرة الفهم وتولد فيه ملكة بقوى بها على تمييز الخير من الشر والنافع من الضار، ولا ينحاشي تعليم الغير إياه، أو دلالاته على مثله أو هدايته إلى ما يراه سبيلاً للنجاح، وحتى لا تأخذه الرهبة من الإقدام على دفع العار واجتلاب ما ينفع الديار.

فلأجل هذا يجب أن يكون في ذلك القانون الأساسي لتلك الحكومة إطلاق حرية المجامع والمطابع والأفكار والأعمال والأقوال، على شريطة أن يكون هذا الإطلاق تحت قانون عدل يرسم الحدود ويبين الواجبات على تفصيل يرفع الإبهام وتبيين يزيل الالتباس.

(°Abduh: *Al-Waqā'if*, 15/2/1882, as cited in °Abduh, 1993, p. 417)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

The perfection of education and learning, as well as the benefits that result therefrom, cannot be achieved but for the freedom of

<sup>51</sup> *Al-majāmi°* (sg.: *al-majma°*) are types of cultural or scientific institutions that focus on a particular field of study and contribute to improvements in that field (Maḥrūs & Sulaymān, 2000a, p. 535).

thought, speech, and actions. This should be the case so that no one is afraid of being blamed or punished for acquiring knowledge that enriches the mind, broadens understanding, and generates the ability to distinguish good from evil, and that which is beneficial from that which is harmful. Moreover, they will be able to teach and guide others to a path that they believe will bring them success, and they will not be afraid to defend the nation, nor will they hesitate to do all that is in its benefit.

To this end, the government remit must be to guarantee the freedom of academies, the press, thoughts, speech, and actions, provided that this freedom is checked by a just law which draws boundaries and identifies everyone's duties in clear detail and an unambiguous manner.

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

In this text, °Abduh calls for several types of freedoms regarding cultural life and intellectual activities, and he defines what should be intended as entitlements. This helps to understand what is meant by each of these terms.

In this article, published on 15 February 1882, °Abduh reports on a ceremony held two days earlier by *Jam'īyyat al-Maqāṣid al-Khayriyyah* (The Charitable Association), a leading civic association founded in 1878 by a group of Egyptian intellectuals and leading figures of the time (among them Muḥammad °Abduh) to raise awareness and debate civic issues. This event celebrated the ratification of *Lā'ihat al-Nuwwāb* (the Constitution of the Representatives), which consisted of fifty-three articles that included regulations and laws setting up the Assembly of Representatives. The constitution, which fulfilled one of the demands of the °Urābī Revolution, was issued on 7 February 1882 by the *Majlis al-Nuwwāb* (the Assembly of Representatives), which had been established on 4 October 1881 after a group of 1,500 nobles and leading figures petitioned Prime Minister Sharīf Pasha to request the establishment of a representative assembly.

In this article, °Abduh summarises the speech he delivered during this ceremony. In fact, it reflects his new activist attitude toward political life, which led to his participation in the revolution and other related events. He recognises that members of the public should engage in political life, and he realises that reforming the society cannot be achieved through education alone. It requires

enabling people to participate in and contribute to changing events, and this could include establishing a parliament that mandates freedoms (°Amārah, 1993, p. 57).

Still, the types of freedoms he calls for cannot be separated from his educationalist attitude, so they mainly concern educational activities. Some involve learning and educating, and others have to do with freedom for cultural institutions, such as the press and academies, that contribute to the spread of knowledge and education.

### **Discussion of the terms**

As mentioned above, °Abduh calls in this text for different types of freedoms and explains their corresponding entitlements. He justifies the freedoms of thought, speech, and actions as allowing individuals to acquire learning, increase understanding, and benefit from greater moral sensibility in distinguishing the good from the bad. The ultimate goal is to develop the rational ability to distinguish between good and evil, to spread 'good' values and practices, and to advise others to adopt them. These freedoms are intended to open up opportunities for education and to enable people to access 'beneficial' knowledge.

In keeping with al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's view on ethical behaviour (see 5.2.2), °Abduh does not define 'good' and 'beneficial', nor does he refer to a source that identifies them. Instead, he counts on people to rely on their intelligence to know right from wrong and to tell the difference between what may help them and what may hurt them. This can be seen as a secular norm. Its importance – in the context of freedom of thought, speech, and actions – lies in its implications for entitlements to, and restrictions of, these freedoms. Considering such norms opens the door to different views and debates over what is considered 'good'.

What distinguishes °Abduh's from al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's views on freedom of thought and expressing ideas is that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī confined this freedom to the educated and the intellectual elite, while °Abduh, perhaps because of what he witnessed in the °Urābī Revolution, called for these freedoms to be widely available. Both al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and °Abduh insist that these freedoms should be organised according

to a just law; °Abduh discusses them as provisional rights to be written into an actual constitution.

In the same article, °Abduh contends that education should be accessible and guaranteed by law, while formal knowledge should be available and held up as a worthwhile pursuit which would qualify people to participate in political affairs. In his words:

Therefore, the legal government should constitutionally guarantee the popularisation of education and the spread of knowledge and sciences, which qualify [people] to be able and prepared to participate in the management of the nation's affairs and direct them to the point of perfection (°Abduh: *Al-Waqā'if*, 15/2/1882, as cited in °Abduh, 1993, p. 417).

#### 7.2.4. Terms of women's freedoms

**Term 1:** *tahrīr al-mar'ah* (liberation of women), sometimes referred to as *hurriyyat al-mar'ah* (women's freedom)

##### First text

أفضل ما يخدم به الشرقي بلاده في هذه الأيام كتاب يُفقه على تثقيف الأخلاق وتهذيب العادات وتنوير البصائر، وإرهاف الأذهان. ومن هذا القبيل كتاب : (تحرير المرأة...)

وقد قصد حضرة المؤلف الفاضل بهذا الكتاب إلى أسمى المقاصد وأنبلها [...] فأشعر قلمه للبحث على إصلاح حال المرأة في الشرق، وأثبت بشواهد عديدة وعبارات مقنعة ومعانٍ جليلة لا غموض فيها ولا إشكال أن الشرع الإسلامي سبق سواه إلى مساواة المرأة بالرجل، وأن تربية المرأة وتعليمها أمران واجبان لا مناص منهما خلافاً لما يعتقده بعض الشرقيين.

(*Tahrīr al-mar'ah*, 1899)

##### Translation [translated by the researcher]

The best way for an Eastern person to serve his country these days is by providing a book which educates on etiquette, manners, refined habits, broadening horizons and enlightening minds. Of these books, there is the one entitled *Tahrīr al-mar'ah* [The liberation of women] [...].

Through this book, the honourable author aimed at attaining the highest and noblest of objectives [...]. He encouraged the need to reform the condition of women in the East, and he supported his argument by relying on numerous testimonies and convincing examples, as well as clear and unproblematic statements that Islamic teaching had advanced over its contemporaries, granting equality between men and women. Moreover, the teaching and

education of women are unavoidable responsibilities, contrary to what some Easterners believe.

## Second text

والناس وإن كانوا متفقين معه على ضرورة تربية المرأة وتعليمها لما ينشأ عنها من المنافع الجليلة، إلا أنهم مختلفون في كيفية تربيتها. ففريق يرى رأي المؤلف في أن التربية لن تصل إلى درجة الكمال المطلوبة إلا برفع الحجاب عنها وإطلاق حريتها في معاشره الرجال.

هل رفع الحجاب عن المرأة وإطلاقها في سبيل حريتها بالطريقة التي يريدها صاحب كتاب (المرأة الجديدة) يسمح به المقام الشريف أم لا؟

(al-Bābilī, 1901)

## Translation [translated by the researcher]

Even if people agreed with him about the importance of educating and teaching women, because of all the excellent benefits that arise from this, they still disagreed about how women should be educated. Some agreed with the author's view that education will not have reached the required level until women become unveiled and have complete freedom to mix with men.

Is the unveiling of women and realisation of their freedom in the way that the author of *al-Mar'ah al-jadidah* [The new woman] wants, permitted by your status of honour?

## Cultural and linguistic context

Qāsim Amīn (d. 1908), an Egyptian social reformer with a modernist Islamic ideology, was very concerned with women's rights issues. In 1899, he published a controversial book entitled *Tahrīr al-mar'ah* [The liberation of women], which discusses the main problems preventing women in the East from participating in public life and fully contributing to their society. These issues include women's education, wearing the veil – *ḥijāb*, and marital issues such as divorce and polygamy. The writer defends the right of girls to be educated in elementary schools and the right of adult women to work in the public sector. He argues that women can choose to be unveiled; moreover, he calls for restrictions on men's right to divorce and to marry more than one woman.

These views caused a heated debate, especially among traditionalists, who objected to them as being inconsistent with Islamic laws and teachings. This took place publicly, in newspaper articles and books, and was described as “perhaps the largest and the most important intellectual fight involving a book in the East in that century” (°Amārah, 1989, p. 54). The controversy, in fact, reflected the situation of women at that time and the entitlements and level of independence that they enjoyed (or lacked).

°Amārah (1989) argues that Muḥammad °Abduh contributed extensively to the book as an undeclared co-author who even wrote some chapters. °Amārah further states that chapters discussing the Islamic aspects of women’s veils, marriage, and divorce reflected not only the views and thoughts of °Abduh but also his style of writing, for it contained specialised and deep knowledge of Islamic Sharī°ah that was not characteristic of Qāsim Amīn himself. °Abduh did not reveal his contribution to the book, according to °Amārah, because of political as well as social considerations; the book offered new and revolutionary views that °Abduh himself could not afford to express for fear of the consequences. As the grand Muftī of the state, he might have been attacked by political adversaries for these views (and for his political positions during and after the revolution), so he avoided engaging in the controversy publicly (124-129).

In 1900, Amīn published another book entitled *al-Mar’ah al-jadīdah* [The new woman], which clarifies some aspects of his previous book and reviews his position on related issues, including women’s education and work. The above texts provide a sample of the differing opinions about this book. The first, published in *Al-Ahrām* on 30 May 1899 under the title *Taḥrīr al-mar’ah* [The liberation of women], is a glowing review by an unidentified reviewer. The second text, published in *Al-Ahrām* on 9 February 1901 under the title *Kitāb maftūḥ* [An open letter] to the Muftī, is a paragraph from a fatwā (religious question) asking Muḥammad °Abduh – the Muftī – for an advisory and juridical opinion regarding the views espoused in the newer book (*al-Mar’ah al-jadīdah*), with which the questioner seems to disagree. °Amārah (1989) claims that this question was sent to *Al-Ahrām* by °Abduh’s opponents in an attempt to embarrass him publicly, since the public maintained a traditionalist attitude and rejected the evolutionary views expressed in the book (p. 127).



## Discussion of the terms

The first text refers to the term *tahrīr al-mar'ah* (liberation of women) as one with a valuable (positive) meaning, and the book review refers to the objectives of the book as 'most noble'. He describes the arguments in the book as indisputable and convincing, refers to the education of women as an 'unavoidable' duty, and sees reforms and equality with men as in line with Islamic teachings.

It is clear that the concept of the liberation of women is used as an equivalent for the right of women to be educated, to choose to unveil, and to engage in public life. In this respect, it was highly valued, for it was considered to be a value that was appreciated in Islam, and thus the concept gained in cultural value.

In contrast, in the second text, the term *hurriyyat al-mar'ah* (women's freedom) refers to allowing women to be unveiled and to communicate freely with men. These controversial values are attached to the negative tone of the questioner, who states that people do not agree with educating women in the way suggested by Amīn. Thus the liberation, or freedom, of women as used in this text refers to controversial values and was given a less valued meaning. It is evident that the attitude of the writer in each text affects the semantic connotative (or emotional) meaning attached to the term.

### 7.2.5. Terms of political freedoms and rights

**Terms 1-3:** *hurriyyat ra'y* (freedom of opinion), *hurriyyat qawl* (freedom of speech), *hurriyyat intikhāb* (freedom to vote)

#### Text

فإذا حصل هذا الأدب للوطني السياسي، وكان مع ذلك نبيل النفس، طاهر الذيل، صادق النية، قادراً على إثارة المصلحة العمومية فله حينئذ، حينئذ فقط، ما لسائر أهل الحياة السياسية؛ وهي حقوق كريمة مقدسة لا ينبغي أن يمسه إلا المطهرون من درن الدننيات: حرية رأي، وحرية قول، وحرية انتخاب.

ولكل من هذه الحقوق الثلاث حد، لو تعداه لكانت الحرية فيه شراً من القيد وأشنع من العبودية: فحد حرية الرأي أن يكون مبنياً على القياس، موافقاً للحكومة، مطابقاً للصواب. وحد حرية القول أن يراد به الخير، ولا يجاوز فيه حد المنفعة والملايمة، ولا يمس شرفاً مصوناً، ولا يضر بريئاً أميناً، ولا ينشر عن غير علم يقين. وحد حرية الانتخاب أن يراد به مصلحة الوطن العزيز ليس إلا.

(<sup>o</sup>Abduh: *Al-Waqā'if*, 9/11/1881, as cited in <sup>o</sup>Abduh, 1993, p. 368)

### **Translation** [translated by the researcher]

If the patriotic politician acquired such ethics, while also being of noble character and noble conduct, and [he] was well intentioned and able to always act in the public interest, then – and only then – would he acquire what all men of politics are entitled to. These entitlements are sacred and sanctified, so they should only be for those who are free from all impurities; they are freedom of opinion, freedom of speech, and the freedom to vote.

There are limits to each of these three rights which, if exceeded, would cause freedom to become worse than being shackled and more heinous than slavery. Thus, the limitations on freedom of opinion are to be based on analogical deductive reasoning [*al-qiyās*], in line with the view of the government, and conforming to correct thought. The limits on freedom of speech are that any speech should intend to achieve goodness, not to go beyond achieving usefulness and appropriateness; it should also be dignified, not harm innocent individuals, and not be published without first verifying the facts. The limitation imposed on the freedom to vote is so that it is only exercised for the benefit of the dear nation, and nothing else.

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

The article discusses the conditions and requirements for engagement in ‘political life’. It was published on 9 November 1881, two months after the height of the <sup>o</sup>Urābī Revolution. As a result of rebel demands, the Assembly of Representatives was established on 4 October 1881, and an election was held two months later (on 23 December 1881). According to the rules, the members of the assembly were elected by mayors and nobles of each city; this obviously allowed the government to control the members. Among other things, the rules stipulated that members of the assembly demonstrate maturity and perfection – *al-rushd wa al-kamāl*, be literate, and be at least twenty-five years old.

In this article, <sup>o</sup>Abduh argues for three types of political freedoms: *ḥurriyyat al-ra’y* (freedom of opinion), *ḥurriyyat al-qawl* (freedom of speech), and *ḥurriyyat al-intikhāb* (freedom to vote). To understand their meanings, their boundaries and definitions, as he articulated them, must be observed.

### **Discussion of the terms**

°Abduh lists the criteria for participation in elections; he sees these as moral requirements for enjoying political rights. Among them are personal characteristics which qualify one for positions serving the nation and working for its progress.

As discussed above, this article was published around the time of public elections for the representative assembly, when the right to elect members of the assembly was confined to *al-a°yān* (the nobles and elites of each city). In reality, °Abduh's conditions are nothing more than justifications for restricting voting rights to a certain social class.

Therefore, it is difficult to agree with the claim that this particular text reflects °Abduh's view on the vital role of intellectuals and the enlightened elite in political life (see Aḥmad, 2012, pp. 210-213), since he does not refer to intellectual characteristics or features but only to his idea of the ethics that characterise a social class. Considering these three terms of freedom, one can conclude that all of them are restricted by political as well as ethical conditions, as illustrated in Table 7.1.

Type of freedom	Political restrictions	Other limitations
<i>ḥurriyyat al-ra'y</i> (freedom of opinion)	in accord with the government's view	being rational and righteous in one's opinions compliance with 'correct' thought
<i>ḥurriyyat al-qawl</i> (freedom of speech)		intentions are to achieve goodness and usefulness without harm to others
<i>ḥurriyyat al-intikhāb</i> (freedom to vote)	should be undertaken only for the benefit of the nation	

**Table 7.1: Limitations referred to in °Abduh's terms of political freedom**

The distinction between *ḥurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion) and *ḥurriyyat al-qawl* (freedom of speech) is that the former refers to opinions involving political practice and roles, while the latter involves the expression of general ideas and views in the public sphere.

The political conditions that provide for freedom of opinion show an attempt by °Abduh to come to an agreement with the political authorities. The other conditions, such as conforming “to correct thought”, are of an ethical nature, aiming to achieve the interest and well-being of the nation.

Although both al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and °Abduh discuss different terms of political freedom, which refers to different types of political practices, both of them limit these freedoms to the elite. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī clearly restricts the right to rule to heads of state and their ministers, while °Abduh allows it for those who are ‘morally qualified’; he is concerned with the rights of a particular social class to vote and to express political ideas and views. This can be seen as a semantic expansion of the range of political freedoms.

Again, °Abduh’s ethical perspective on freedom cannot be separated from his educationalist orientation. His definition of freedom is “the right to perform and execute known duties and responsibilities” (°Abduh: *Al-Waqā’i*, 28/11/881, as cited in °Abduh, 1993, p. 373). This is significant because it is in line with Islam’s ethical perspective on freedom (as opposed to a more liberal view); alternatively, it might implicitly be an attempt to avoid incurring the anger of the either political or religious traditionalist authorities.

#### **Term 4: ḥuqūq siyāsiyyah (political rights)**

##### **Text**

ولا شك في وصولنا الآن إلى هذه المرتبة العالية وحصولنا في هذا الدور الخطير، بما أطلق لنا من الحرية، وما تقرر لنا من الحقوق السياسية عفواً واختياراً من دون غصب يلزم فيه الرد ولا تغرير يحتمل النقص. ولكننا لا نزال في دور الطفولية من هذه الحياة، فلا بد لنا من مرب حكيم يأخذ بيدنا فيما نعانیه.

(°Abduh: *Al-Waqā’i*, 9/11/1881, as cited in °Abduh, 1993, p. 365)

##### **Translation [translated by the researcher]**

There is no doubt that we have now reached such a high stage and achieved this crucial role by allowing us to have freedom, and entitling us to political rights voluntarily, without grasping or solicitation. Nevertheless, we are still in the infancy stage of life, so we need a wise educator to guide us regarding what we are experiencing.

##### **Cultural and linguistic context**

This text is taken from the same article quoted above, *al-Ḥayat al-siyāsiyyah* [Political life], which discusses the requirements for taking part in political life, in ʿAbduh's view. The cultural context of the article was discussed earlier in this section.

In terms of semantics, the text itself does not include a direct explanation of the term *ḥuqūq siyāsiyyah* (political rights) and its entitlements, yet these can be deduced from other parts of the article and from the cultural context.

### Discussion of the term

The term *ḥuqūq siyāsiyyah* (political rights) refers to a restricted permission from the government, allowing educated and noble men to vote and to be candidates for the Assembly of Representatives.

Despite the restricted rights and the restricted role of the assembly, the term, at the semantic level, witnessed an expansion of meaning compared to what was conveyed by it in the first period, by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī. This semantic expansion is linked to the political situation and influenced by what is permitted by the political authorities.

### Term 5: *ḥuqūq wataniyyah* (national rights)

#### Text

فعلى كل وطني في قلبه مثقال ذرة من محبة الوطن أن يطالب بتلك الحقوق التي أوشكت أن تضيع وتتوارى بالحجاب، وأن يستنصر من يتوسم في نصرتهم رد حقوقه المهضومة واستقلاله المسلوب.

(Aḥad al-Miṣriyyīn fī al-thaghr, 1896)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

Every citizen who holds in his heart a whit of patriotism should demand those rights [i.e., national rights], which are about to be lost and hidden in the veil. He should also seek help from those whose help could return our lost rights and our stolen independence.

#### Cultural and linguistic context

This text is taken from an article published in *Al-Ahrām* on 15 July 1896 under the title *Al-Ḥujjah al-wāḍiḥah li daʿ al-afkār al-sāniḥah* [A clear argument

refuting passing thoughts]. The anonymous writer, named only as *Aḥad afāḍil al-Miṣriyyīn fī al-thaḡhr* (one of the virtuous Egyptians at the coastal borders), is responding to an article published in “one of the capital city’s newspapers”, written by Ḥasan Mūsā al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād, an Egyptian tradesman and political activist who was involved in the <sup>°</sup>Urābī Revolution. The topic was forcing the British to leave, which was central to the activities of the main nationalist of that period, Muṣṭafā Kāmil (d. 1908).

On 3 March 1896, upon his return to Egypt from Europe, Kāmil delivered a major national speech attended by hundreds of people, in which he called for true independence and demanded an end to British occupation. He asked listeners to raise their hands if they agreed with him, and they all raised their hands (al-Rāfi<sup>°</sup>ī, 1938/1999, pp. 78-79).

The writer calls for the British to leave completely, and he criticises the views of Ḥasan al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād, who proposed that the British be allowed to continue their involvement in the civil administration of the country. The term *ḥuqūq waṭaniyyah* (national rights) is mentioned several times in the article; although it is referred to in the excerpt above simply as *al-ḥuqūq* (the rights), this text was chosen because of its ‘strategic importance’ for the semantic analysis of the term.

### **Discussion of the term**

The term *ḥuqūq waṭaniyyah* (national rights) is intended to refer to the national independence of the state, which obviously requires the departure of any foreign occupying force. Clearly, ‘rights’ in this context refer to the political meaning of sovereignty, which pertains to states rather than individuals.

Personal freedom and rights	Economic freedom	Intellectual freedom	Women's freedom	Political freedom and rights
<i>ḥurriyyat al-ashkhāṣ al-siyāsiyyah</i> (political freedom of individuals)	<i>ḥurriyyat al-ʿamal</i> (freedom of work) <sup>52</sup>	<i>ḥurriyyat al-afkār</i> (freedom of thought), <i>ḥurriyyat al-aqwāl</i> (freedom of speech), <i>ḥurriyyat al-aʿmāl</i> (freedom of actions),	<i>taḥrīr al-mar'ah</i> (liberation of women), <i>ḥurriyyat al-mar'ah</i> (women's freedom)	<i>ḥurriyyat al-ra'y</i> (freedom of opinion) <i>ḥurriyyat al-qawl</i> (freedom of speech) <i>ḥurriyyat al-intikhāb</i> (freedom to voting)
<i>ḥuqūq ṭabīʿiyyah</i> (natural rights)		<i>ḥurriyyat al-majāmiʿ</i> (freedom of academies) <i>ḥurriyyat al-maṭābiʿ</i> (freedom of the press)		<i>ḥuqūq siyāsiyyah</i> (political rights)
<i>ḥurriyyat al-tafannun</i> (freedom of artistic work)				<i>ḥuqūq waṭaniyyah</i> (national rights)

Table 8.1: The semantic field of freedoms and rights in the second period

<sup>52</sup> The same term was used to convey two types of freedom which refers to different entitlements.





## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Analysis of the World View of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Second Period (Political Articles 1879-1918)

#### **8.0. Introduction**

This chapter is concerned with the analysis of the terms discussed in Chapter Seven. The analysis takes the same format as Chapter Six: (1) terms are categorised into sub-semantic fields according to the type of freedoms and rights to which they refer, in order to examine their structure as used in the texts of this second period; and (2) each term's meaning is identified by analysing its main semantic features (i.e., entitlements and limitations).

This process illustrates the view of freedoms and rights in the second period, and how it changed since the first period. This, in turn, enables assessment of the actual contribution of the writers of this period in introducing and/or developing ideas of freedoms and rights in Egypt.

#### **8.1. The semantic field of freedoms and rights in the second period**

The terms of freedoms and rights that are found in the texts of the second period (see Table 8.1) can be categorised into five sub-semantic fields, reflecting a decrease in the number of the categories of freedoms and rights from the first period, which had six sub-semantic fields (see Table 6.1).

Also, these types of freedom are not identical to those of the first period; the sub-fields of religious freedom and social freedom are absent, and a new sub-field having to do with the freedom of a specific group of people, namely women, has been added.

The existing sub-fields related to intellectual freedoms and political rights witnessed the emergence of more terms reflecting different types of practices. These changes are assessed in the following section, when the semantic features are examined to observe whether these terms include an expansion or loss of associated entitlements.

To identify the semantic features of each term, the symbol (+) indicates entitlements, and (-) represents restrictions.

### 8.1.1. Terms of personal freedoms and rights

**Term 1:** hurriyyat al-ashkhās al-siyāsiyyah (political freedom of individuals)

- (+) The right of individuals to behave as they wish in their personal affairs (including practising their cultural habits and women's customs such as tattooing and female circumcision) without being prevented from doing so by government regulations.
- (+) Establishing fair courts and a constitution to legally guarantee people's personal rights.
- (-) Rights or practices were confined to personal matters.

**Term 2:** huqūq tabīʿiyyah (natural rights)

- (+) The right of individuals to engage in actions having to do with earning a livelihood and securing the basic necessities of life.

**Term 3:** hurriyyat al-ariqqā' (freedom of slaves)

- (+) The right of slaves to be free and to not be sold.

**Term 4:** hurriyyat al-tafannun (freedom of artistic work)

- (+) The right of females to be involved in prostitution as a legal profession (see Section 7.2.1.).

### 8.1.2. Terms of economic freedoms

**Term 1:** hurriyyat al-ʿamal (freedom of work); used to express two different meanings

- (+) The right of labourers not to be flogged by government officers.
- (+) The right of labourers not to be forced into unpaid work.
- (+) The freedom of individuals to engage in various economic activities and projects having to do with trade, manufacturing and agriculture.

### 8.1.3. Terms of intellectual freedoms

**Term 1:** hurriyyat al-afkār (freedom of thought)

- (+) The freedom of individuals to engage in learning activities that help to improve their capabilities for rational thought, so that they are better able to know right from wrong and to tell the difference between what may help them and what may hurt them.

**Term 2:** hurriyyat al-aqwāl (freedom of speech)

- (+) The freedom of individuals to express views and to convey knowledge that they think is good and useful.

**Term 3:** hurriyyat al- a<sup>c</sup>māl (freedom of actions)

- (+) The freedom of individuals to engage in activities having to do with learning, education and intellectual debate, which allow them to acquire learning and to pass on knowledge and views that they think are good and useful.
- (-) These freedoms should be limited to what is beneficial and good for individuals and nations.<sup>53</sup>

**Term 4:** hurriyyat al-majāmi<sup>c</sup> (freedom of academies)

- (+) The freedom of educational institutions, which allows educated people to communicate ideas and to engage in intellectual debate and other activities intended to be useful to and to benefit both individuals and the country as a whole.

**Term 5:** hurriyyat al-matābī<sup>c</sup> (freedom of the press)

- (+) The freedom of the press to circulate useful knowledge and thoughts by publishing them.

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<sup>53</sup> The restrictions in Section 8.1 use general words like 'good' and 'just', but the writer does not specify exactly what is meant by these words.

- (-) These freedoms (of Terms 2-5) should be in accord with just laws, which clearly state the limitations of these freedoms and identify duties and responsibilities.
- (-) These freedoms (of Terms 2-5) are intended to be limited to what has a beneficial and good effect on individuals and their country.

#### **8.1.4. Terms of women's freedoms**

**Term 1:** tahrīr al-mar'ah (liberation of women), sometimes referred to as hurriyyat al-mar'ah (women's freedom)

- (+) The right of women to be educated, to be employed, and to unveil.

#### **8.1.5. Terms of political freedoms**

**Term 1:** hurriyyat al-ra'y (freedom of opinion)

- (+) The right of the elites who have seats in the representative assembly to express views and opinions on political practices before the assembly.
- (-) These views and opinions should be rational, consistent with accepted standards of right and wrong, and not in conflict with the views of the government.

**Term 2:** hurriyyat al-qawl (freedom of speech)

- (+) The right of elites – those who are eligible to be representatives in the assembly – to publicly share their opinions on general issues.
- (-) These views and opinions should not harm others; they are intended to be useful and to achieve goodness.

**Term 3:** hurriyyat al-intikhāb (freedom to vote)

- (+) The right of eligible elites to elect members of the representative assembly.
- (-) This right should be practised in the interests of achieving benefits to the nation.

**Term 4:** ḥuqūq siyāsiyyah (political rights)

- (+) The right of eligible elites to enjoy the previously mentioned political freedoms – i.e., *ḥurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion), *ḥurriyyat al-qawl* (freedom of speech), and *ḥurriyyat al-intikhāb* (freedom to vote).
- (-) The restrictions on these rights are those specified for the three types of political freedoms and rights mentioned above).

**Term 5:** ḥuqūq waṭaniyyah (national rights)

- (+) The right of the country to self-determination and complete freedom from foreign political occupation or domination.

## **8.2. The world view of freedoms and rights in the second period**

The first thing to note in the texts of the second period is that unlike the first period, which only consulted one source (al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's writings), the texts consulted in the second period are taken from two newspapers and written by several authors, but primarily by Muḥammad ʿAbduh. This approach offers more varied points of view and discovers different uses for the terms; these uses are sometimes reflected in interpretations where one term offers more than a single meaning (in different texts), or more than one term is used to convey different dimensions of the same concept.

This period witnessed crucial political events, including the military revolt of ʿUrābī, which ended in a public revolution. Initially, this revolution achieved a number of demands; a parliament was established, public elections were held, and a constitution was written. But this era ended with the British occupation of the country in 1882, when a new phase of suffering and struggle for freedoms and rights began, with changes in the demands being made. Under both a tyrannical government of absolute rule, and foreign occupation, people of different classes were publicly demanding their freedom. These demands were a central concern for political writers; this time, they themselves took part not only in the debate but also in related political events.

Since Muḥammad ʿAbduh was a major figure, and perhaps the most prominent writer of this period, his texts were repeatedly consulted. In some respects, he

was very much like al-Ṭaḥṭāwī. Both were clerics who had received a traditional education at al-Azhar, and both were scholars concerned with reforming traditional education and Islamic thinking as a way of developing their society. They both experienced aspects of modern European civilisation and sciences, strongly admiring and valuing certain features of European civilisation. Moreover, they believed that cultural interaction with the modern world would serve as a bridge connecting the societies and would lead to a renaissance in Egypt, and in Arabic and Islamic culture in general.

What distinguished °Abduh from al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was that unlike his predecessor, who was engaged with the question of reform at a theoretical level, °Abduh (and other writers of this period) joined in political activities as well. He was a speaker and activist in the °Urābī Revolution, and he played a role in other political events and institutions that were inaugurated in the wake of the revolution. Consequently, he developed a more expanded and practical view of freedom than that of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī. It should be remembered, though, that these political institutions and intellectual debates were controlled at all times by dictatorial authorities who used the elite class to support their positions, allowing them to speak and act freely only in realms that did not pose a threat to their rule.

These new experiences in political reality were reflected in the political texts consulted and in the terms of freedoms and rights found. This second period saw an emergence of a new semantic field that did not exist in the first period: women's freedoms and rights, which replaced the field of social freedom (found in the first period). The terms of social freedom included *ḥurriyyah sulūkiyyah* – behavioural freedom – and *ḥurriyyah madaniyyah* – civil freedom, both of which address theoretical concepts rather than actual practices; they are mainly concerned with raising people's awareness and responsibilities toward enabling and encouraging each other to act freely. In contrast, the new term *ḥurriyyat al-mar'ah* (women's freedom), or *tahrīr al-mar'ah* (liberation of women), was meant to entitle women to participate in public life through education, work, and manner of dress. This marks a shift from an interest in abstract entitlements (e.g., acceptance, encouraging people in what they choose to do) toward more practical entitlements (e.g., studying, working, and unveiling). The term was certainly not meant to suggest legal rights for the empowerment of women or

their engagement in the public sphere. Instead the focus was on basic social reforms in their situation to provide them with the minimal accessibility associated with daily life.

Hence, these practices started out as theoretical concepts rather than actual demands. They mainly appeared in abstract discussions in a book by Qāsim Amīn, the educated social reformer who argued that women should be allowed to practise a limited set of actions. This semantic field emerged as a result of intellectual reasoning rather than actual political activity.

At the conceptual level, these arguments were controversial because they represented different uses and understandings of freedom; semantically, they were mirrored in the connotative meanings associated with the term, in which *taḥrīr al-mar'ah* (liberation of women) sometimes appeared to be ameliorative (i.e., more positively valued), and elsewhere was pejorative (i.e., less valued). Opinions concerning the term were built upon different cultural perspectives and ideologies, depending on which writer was articulating the position. In any case, the huge debate over these basic entitlements for women was evidence of women's isolation from public life.

In the semantic field of intellectual freedom, there were significant new demands involving education and learning, with the public hearing new terms describing types of legal and institutional freedoms that would enable them to pursue an education. Unlike that of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, who restricted education to the intellectual elite, °Abduh's expanded vision extended this entitlement to the public. One aspect of this expansion was that cultural institutions such as academies and publishers would have freedoms enabling them to spread their knowledge.

This proposed expansion not only reflected an improvement in the educationalist orientation of °Abduh, who argued that everyone was eligible to engage in the practice of spreading education and knowledge, but it also implied the need to institutionalise intellectual organisations rather than simply relying on the good will of individuals to contribute to the development of the society. This extension of his view on education is consistent with the political experience of the revolution, when the ordinary members of the public participated effectively in the struggle for freedoms and reform, demonstrating

their aspirations for national demands to be fulfilled. Moreover, the establishment of constitutional organisations as a result of these demands led to an institutional view of other aspects of life.

In all cases, the entitlements for individuals and institutions to discuss and publish their views were restricted to what was considered good and beneficial for the society and individuals, but there was some expansion in the understanding of these freedoms. Like al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, °Abduh did not define what was ‘good’; he left that open to individual views and perspectives. Still, there was an important change to the educational orientation of his predecessor, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, who also regarded individual perspectives of ‘good’ as the standards of personal behaviour. °Abduh provided a more expanded view, arguing for the right of individuals – provided that they are rational enough to distinguish good from evil – not only to choose how to behave themselves, but also to educate others by spreading their knowledge and views regarding what they saw as good. This appears to be a more secular view of morality.

Economic freedom deals with the rights of individuals to work and practise business activities. Clearly, the term *ḥurriyyat al-°amal* (freedom of work), which is mentioned by °Abduh, is shared with al-Ṭaḥṭāwī. They both suggest that individuals should be able to engage in economic activities through trade, manufacturing, and agriculture. Also, they both advocate this type of freedom as being essential for the country’s renaissance and development. Unlike al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, °Abduh does not mention any conditions or requirements for these practices.

As an indication of a more expanded view of freedom, this view seems incompatible with the previous concept of freedom to work (despite being in the same semantic field, where the term refers to a modest entitlement for labourers but hardly guarantees even a minimum level of dignity). Here, it should be recalled that his modest vision of ‘rights’ merely reflected what was newly permitted to labourers by the government; °Abduh praises this recent change and describes it as a development in people’s freedoms. Again, this point illustrates that he seems to coin terms only for freedoms which express entitlements that were already allowed, or at least were not prohibited by the political authority. This is not very different from al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s position, which



was also subject to dictatorial political authorities, except that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī introduced freedom at the abstract level, while ʿAbduh was dealing with the concrete. In other words, restrictions on the writer in the first period (in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's texts) were mainly of a conceptual nature, but for the texts belonging to this period (ʿAbduh's texts and those of others), the restrictions were actually applied.

Still, apart from the terms concerned with enabling people to participate in public life regarding their own affairs, and propositions which include selling their labour, there is no conceptual expansion of entitlements of 'personal freedom'. Entitlements conveyed by the terms in this field of personal freedom are limited to what already existed, either in the classical meaning of freedom in Arabic (i.e., the opposite of slavery), or the freedom to practise personal customs, traditions, and so on. Texts are associated with a negative connotative meaning of freedom because that which is referred to in terms of personal freedoms is likely to be pejorative from a cultural stance, and subject to variation among different cultures (e.g., prostitution, slavery, female circumcision, or early marriage). Therefore, texts that contain these terms are controversial with respect to how people should be entitled to practise their own affairs. In fact, the concept mirrors the reality of struggling against foreign occupation or against a dictatorial government that prefers to allow people to spend their leisure time fulfilling their desires rather than engaging in politics.

It should be noted that in some cases, it was argued that these limited personal freedoms were guaranteed by law and that people were entitled to define and claim these rights. This new legal dimension appeared as a result of both the constitutional experiment in the wake of ʿUrābī's Revolution, and the military system of occupation (where military courts ruled on civilian issues). The range of experiences contributed to people's understanding of what was allowed or owed to them by the state's legal institutions. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī always mentioned 'rules' and 'laws'; what is new here is the reference to legal institutions that were intended to guarantee certain freedoms, although they were not effective because they were established for, and controlled by, the military occupation or the government itself.

The field of political freedoms includes new terms having to do with political practices, such as voting and expressing political opinions. It exists as a result of political change and the establishment of a representative assembly. These terms and subsequent practices were restricted to an elite social class, and the practices apparently were not prohibited by the political authorities. The difference, however, was that by then, freedoms and rights had become a topic of public debate in the newspapers, with many writers and intellectuals taking part. At the conceptual level, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī started an important initiative when he opened the door to this debate, even though he himself could not participate due to political restrictions.

In contrast to women's freedoms and rights, the semantic field of religious freedoms appears to be completely absent in the texts of this period. In the context of the national struggle, with liberation the main concern, debate on other types of freedom apparently got lost in the process. It is clear in the semantic field of rights that the rights to political independence and liberation were prevailing at this time. This is also apparent in a number of articles belonging to this period, where the term freedom mainly refers to political independence and liberation from occupation.

A comparison of the structure of semantic fields of this period with that of the first period shows that as a result of the political struggle, the notion of freedoms and rights became associated with the debates occurring in the media at the time – debates that were constrained by autocratic political authorities. Restrictions based on the authority of traditional religious figures did not play as important a role here as they did at the time of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī; in this second period, a new generation of religious figures were actually participating in political movements, discussing modern ideas, and calling for more rights. The restrictions that played a major role at this period were those of a political nature, coming from the political authorities. The public participation that was so vital to the revolution did not actually result in political rights being granted to the public, or even to theoretical demands for them. The field expanded to include elite members of society in addition to rulers and ministers, but there was no place for anyone else.

The foreign occupation, of course, caused a decline in this conceptual and semantic expansion. Demands were modest and very much limited to individual behaviours as the central concept of freedom became associated with the nation's liberation rather than freedoms and rights for the people.

In conclusion, the world view of freedoms and rights as expressed in the texts of the second period can be summarised in the following points:

- the national meaning of freedom became a fundamental concern;
- it was argued that individuals should be permitted to act according to their will and to practise their customs in private as well as in the public sphere, engaging in economic and cultural activities;
- political rights should be permitted for the educated elites in the society, enabling them to debate political issues and concerns; and
- the people's legal rights should be guaranteed and defended by legal institutions and laws.



## CHAPTER NINE

### Discussion of Terms of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Third Period (Political Articles 1919–1952)

#### 9.0. Introduction

This chapter deals with the third stage of the chronological examination of the vocabularies of freedoms and rights, focusing on how the terms were used in political articles published in *Al-Ahrām* newspaper during the period from 1919, the year of the Revolution of 1919, until the end of 1952, the year which witnessed the July Revolution, when a group of Egyptian officers overthrew King Fārūq (r. 1936-1952) and then established the Republic of Egypt in 1953. The discussion in this chapter, as in Chapters Five and Seven, follows Agius' (1984) model.

#### 9.1. The cultural context of political articles of the third period; *Al-Ahrām* articles<sup>54, 55</sup>

The ʿUrābī Revolution had ended in 1882 with a British invasion of Egypt, and although it was not ultimately successful, it contributed socially, as well as intellectually, to public awareness and a desire for liberation. The widespread public participation and debate over freedoms and rights were among the issues that occupied the newspapers (although the writings were always by intellectual elites) and new political institutions. This atmosphere of resentment and struggle against the oppressive practices imposed under military authority created a platform for the Revolution of 1919, which could be described as having more public awareness and participation, and a more lasting impact, than the ʿUrābī Revolution.

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<sup>54</sup> Chapter Three provided an overview of the geopolitical context; this is crucial to understanding the context of the texts' production.

<sup>55</sup> The main sources of the historical events mentioned in this chapter are from al-Rāfiʿī (1947/1987c, 1946/1987f, 1949/1988, 1930/1989a).

The Revolution of 1919 broke out in response to the continuing British occupation, and its demands were political: full independence for Egypt and a representative system of government. This nationwide uprising brought together Egyptians of different classes, ideologies and professions. It achieved some concessions from the British government, which offered to cancel the protectorate and recognise Egypt's independence, albeit with conditions. This reality led to political negotiations between the British and the Egyptians, who were represented by *Al-Wafd* (the Delegation).

This publicly nominated, national delegation for liberation was led by Saʿd Zaghlūl (d. 1927), the nationalist leader who had previously been detained and exiled as a result of his political activity and demands; in fact, his arrest was the spark that ignited the Revolution of 1919. Zaghlūl was keen to share his political activities, including these negotiations, publicly as a way to increase awareness and gain support for his cause. This transparency was manifested in the newspapers on a daily basis, and it had an impact on the public debate at the conceptual level, regarding the merits and struggles of national liberation. It was not only the social, political and intellectual elites who supported the demonstrations, public meetings, and other activities, but also the general public. The openness also shaped political identities and divisions, creating a polarised situation that was reflected in the language of the demands and in the terms of freedoms and rights that were used to convey a variety of meanings.

In the early years of the struggle and the debate over freedoms and rights, ideas were evolving; therefore, their meanings at any given time are dependent on the historical context. In this respect, they offer a modest vision of entitlements. The political experiment itself was new, and the revolutionary nature of public discourse aimed to influence public opinion. The political situation underwent extensive social and economic changes, one of which was the participation of women in political life. This background must be considered when examining texts produced in this period.

This change in political realities is reflected unambiguously in the terms of freedoms and rights found in the texts of this period, in which the main concerns are with the process of political change. Although the number of political articles available in this third period exceeds that of the previous two periods, the terms

of freedoms and rights under consideration were not always found in these texts.

## 9.2. The vocabularies of freedoms and rights

### 9.2.1. The central terms of freedom

#### Term 1: hurriyyah (freedom)

The term *hurriyyah* has often been used to convey several different meanings, but primarily:

- 1) the political independence of the country,
- 2) the sense of a just political system rather than simply democracy in the sense of 'one person one vote', and
- 3) personal freedom in a liberal sense.

This section discusses selected texts that convey these different meanings of *hurriyyah*. Reference is made to other texts belonging to this period, but they are not all discussed in detail; a representative sample has been chosen for close examination.

#### Term 2: hurriyyah (freedom) in the sense of the political independence of the state

##### First text

[...] الغرض الذي يرمي إليه الجميع، وهو: حرية هذه الأمة واستقلالها بإدارة شئونها.

(A Yaşduq al-naba'?, 1921)

##### Translation [translated by the researcher]

...the objective that all aim to achieve, that is, the [attainment of] freedom for this nation and its independence in administering its own affairs.

##### Second text

فإنكم بذلك تقضون على آمال خصومكم، وتبرهنون على أنكم جديرون بما تطلبون لـ"وادي النيل" المقدس من حرية كاملة واستقلال تام.

(Thābit, 1925)

### **Translation** [translated by the researcher]

With this, you are eliminating the hopes of your opponents and are proving that you are worthy of the demands you are making for the complete liberation and independence of the sacred Nile Valley.

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

In September 1919, the British government appointed Alfred Milner (d. 1925), a former colonial administrator, to lead a commission charged with recommending a new policy towards Egypt, one that reconciled Britain's desire to maintain control with Egyptian demands for complete independence. This commission met with huge opposition from Egyptians of all walks of life, and when sizeable protests broke out in different cities, they were suppressed by the Egyptian police, supported by the British army. By the time the commission visited Egypt on 7 December 1919 to begin its enquiry, the protests and strikes by students, traders, lawyers, workers, women, Christians, and Azharites had resumed.

After the newspapers received many opinion pieces from those voicing their dissent against the British commission, a regulation was issued in mid-December 1919 that threatened to ban newspapers if these protestations continued. On 29 December 1919, Milner announced that the aim of the commission was to achieve both "the ambitious hopes of the Egyptian nation and the private interests of Great Britain in Egypt" (as cited in al-Rāfi<sup>ḥ</sup>, 1946/1987f, p. 435). The Milner commission stayed in Egypt until 6 March 1920.

Milner's commission recognised that Egyptian Wafdists would be willing to negotiate the terms of a British departure from Egypt if it meant sealing an agreement, so in May 1920, a member of the commission travelled to Paris to invite Sa<sup>ḥ</sup>d Zaghlūl to negotiations in London. One month later, the Wafdists arrived in London to meet Milner. When the negotiations began, both the British and Egyptian delegations submitted their demands, and each set of demands was rejected by the other party.

Each party then revised their demands, but the Wafdists decided that they must consult the nation before agreeing to anything. They recognised that the demands included a British protectorate in Egypt, and they were unwilling to accept responsibility for that. On 22 August, Zaghlūl published a proclamation to



the Egyptian nation, and the subsequent large number of newspaper articles discussing this matter reflected the interest in this debate. The texts under consideration here offer views on the Wafdist position vis-à-vis the Milner project. Clearly, limitations were in place regarding what could and could not be published in the newspapers, but in the texts of this period, freedom referred to this nationalistic sense among the populace.

Both of the cited texts refer to the meaning in the sense of political independence and self-determination, and both of them support the Wafdist position. The first text is the conclusion of an *Al-Ahrām* editorial entitled *A Yaşduq al-naba'? Bayn siyāsāt al-Wafd wa siyāsāt al-wizārah al-Inkilīziyyah* [Will the news be true? Between the policy of the delegation and the policy of the English government], published on 15 January 1921. Addressing the public controversy over the ongoing negotiations, the writer comes out in support of *Al-Wafd's* position and seeks to excuse their compromises as necessary to make the negotiations successful. Others criticise their decisions, though.

The second text is an excerpt from *Nidā' al-nisā' lil-sha'b al-Miṣrī* [A woman's call to the Egyptian people], published on 12 January 1925 by Munīrah Thābit, a female lawyer, feminist activist, and political writer. She urges male voters to support the Wafdists in the parliamentary elections to be held two months later (on 12 March 1925). As a female, Thābit herself was not eligible to vote; she states in the same article that women are “prevented from their ‘natural right’ of electing”. She justifies her call to support the Wafdists by suggesting that this choice could represent the views of both men and women. She also suggests that Wafdists – unlike the current government – would adopt a policy opposing the government and resisting the foreign occupation, so that they could achieve the national aims of freedom and independence.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> The constitution written after the revolution, on 19 April 1923, refers to the establishment of an elected parliament. The law of elections was issued ten days later, and the outcome of the election (which was held on January 1924) was that the Wafdist party constituted the first elected government. This government resigned not long afterwards, on 23 November 1924, as a result of pressure from the British government over the assassination of two British officers a few days earlier in Cairo. The same day, another new government was formed, and Prime Minister Aḥmad Zīwar Pasha was appointed president of the Senate. (This government was described as being on the side of both the king and the British authorities). A month later, this parliament was dissolved by Zīwar's government, and a new election was held on 12 March 1925.

## Discussion of the term

Clearly, both texts refer to freedom as political independence, wherein the nation enjoys self-determination over its affairs. This meaning of freedom is inferred from the political and linguistic context, in which the term freedom, in both texts, is associated with *istiqlāl* (independence) – *istiqlāl al-tāmm* (full independence), or *istiqlāl* (independence), in the first text above, in reference to nationhood.<sup>57</sup>

### Term 3: hurriyyah (freedom, in the liberal sense of personal freedom)

#### Text

ويجب علينا أن نعرف أن الحرية تختلف عن الاستقلال، وأنها تختص بالأفراد بينما الاستقلال يختص بالشعوب، وأنه يمكن للأولى أن توجد من غير الثاني، وبالعكس. وبرهاني على ذلك أننا كنا مستقلين في عهد الخديوي اسماعيل ولكننا لم نكن أحراراً، وأن شعوب بعض المستعمرات الانجليزية تابعون لانجلترا ولو أن أفراد تلك الشعوب تمتعون بكل أنواع الحرية. فاستقلال الحكومات لا ينافي استعباد الأفراد، وحرية الأفراد لا تُحتم استقلال الحكومات.

(Buṭrus, 1921)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

We must recognise that freedom differs from independence, and it concerns individuals, while independence concerns nations. The former can exist without the latter and vice versa. My evidence for this is that we were independent during the reign of Khedive Ismāʿīl, yet we were not free, and that the people of some English colonies belong to England even though those individuals enjoy all types of freedoms. The independence of governments does not necessarily prevent the enslavement of individuals, and the freedom of individuals does not necessitate the independence of governments.

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<sup>57</sup> The term *hurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom) was also used to precisely convey the meaning of political independence of the nation, in an article belonging to this period, published on 4 March 1920 by Salāmah Mūsā, a socialist, secular journalist and political writer with a Westernised orientation (Mūsā, 1920). It was also used in the statement of the Egyptian Delegation published on 2 January 1922 (Maḥmūd et al., 1922). Other terms referring to the right to political independence and self-determination were expressed in several ways in many texts of this period; they included *al-ḥaqq fī taqrīr al-maṣīr* (the right of self-determination), *ḥuqūq al-bilād* (the rights of the country), *ḥuqūq al-ummah* (nation's rights), *ḥuqūq waṭaniyyah* (national rights), and *ḥaqq ṭabīʿī* (natural right).

## Cultural and linguistic context

Under the title *Al-Funūn al-jamīlah wa al-ḥurriyyah wa al-istiqlāl* [Fine arts and freedom and independence], Shaḥdī Buṭrus published an editorial in *Al-Ahrām* on 23 August 1921 discussing what he described as “the bond between political status and the status of fine arts in a country”. The writer, who is described as holding a diploma in political sciences and having graduated from the Sorbonne University in Paris, makes a clear distinction between the two terms *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) and *istiqlāl* (independence). He asserts that dignity in individuals fosters their tendency towards freedom as well as to independence. In his view, people who have dignity will abhor living under occupation, which naturally provokes nationalist feelings that urge people to seek independence. By the same token, love and loyalty among individuals of the same nation are based on national, rather than personal, bonds that develop when people recognise the importance of building a united and strong nation. These nationalist feelings can be nurtured by the fine arts, which can influence human feelings concerning virtue.

This article is apparently derived from the political circumstances in Egypt in a year that witnessed an internal political split, which became public, between the Wafdists and the Egyptian government. Out of four conditions proposed by the Wafdists for the negotiations, two were refused by the Egyptian government: a complete cancellation of martial law and of press censorship prior to the start of the negotiations. Another condition that caused a fundamental disagreement was that Wafdists make up the majority of the negotiators and hold the position of president of the Egyptian authority for negotiations; the Egyptian government found this unacceptable because it claimed the presidency for its Prime Minister. The disagreement also caused a split within the Wafdists themselves, and a group of them resigned. Demonstrations against the government and those who resigned were broken up in a violent confrontation in May 1921.

## Discussion of the term

Buṭrus distinguishes between *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) and *istiqlāl* (independence). He defines *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) as the individual's ability to act according to his free will, whereas *istiqlāl* is a political state of being free from foreign occupation and having self-determination. This meaning of the political independence of the

nation – *istiqlāl* – was referred to as freedom – *ḥurriyyah* – in many texts of this period.

The writer looks to different historical periods to support his contention of a lack of correlation between the two concepts. He claims that Egypt was an independent state in the era of Khedive Ismāʿīl (r. 1863-1879), but that individual freedom was non-existent, while quite the opposite was true in some states occupied by England, where political independence of the state was absent, yet the inhabitants were “enjoy[ing] all types of freedom”.

The texts lack historical evidence to prove the writer’s claims, nor is there any detailed explanation of the individual entitlements associated with political freedom. The implication is that when Buṭrus refers to the freedom of personal actions, he is not including any types of freedoms in the public sphere, such as political freedom. I have come to this conclusion because by definition, people under foreign occupation do not enjoy “all types of freedom” – beyond a limited degree of freedom having to do with personal matters.

While it is true that Khedive Ismāʿīl was an absolute ruler, it is not clear why Buṭrus refers to Ismāʿīl himself. It may be because his regime was prior to both the British occupation and the ʿUrābī Revolution, so his reign represented the last time that people experienced political independence (albeit under a dictatorial regime) without foreign occupation or a constitutional system.

Moreover, the distinction that Buṭrus introduces, between independence and freedom, reflects the influence of the liberal concept of freedom found in the French political system, which the writer (like al-Ṭaḥṭāwī before him) is likely to have been aware of when he lived in Paris.

**Term 4:** *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) in the sense of a just political system rather than the democracy of ‘one person one vote’

#### **Text**

المطالبة بالحرية من الجمهور حديث العهد بالسياسة، لا تدل إلا على شيء واحد: وهو أن هذا الجمهور ساخط على النظام السياسي القديم، مطالب بنظام سياسي جديد.

(Husayn, 1921)

### **Translation** [translated by the researcher]

The demand for freedom by publics who are new to politics signifies one thing only: that people have become disaffected with the old political regime and now demand a new one.

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

Under the title *A Dīmuqrāṭiyyah am ṭughyān?* [Democracy or tyranny?], Ṭāhā Ḥusayn explores how people in general, and Egyptian society in particular, envision the concept of freedom and how that is reflected in the political reality in Egypt. The article, published 25 July 1921, came at a time of division between the Egyptian political parties, which was characterised by the violent public demonstrations mentioned earlier. Ḥusayn, an intellectual, was observing the sociopolitical phenomena involved in a changing political reality. In this article, he addresses freedom at a conceptual level, questioning how people who are newly introduced to the struggle for liberty conceive of it and how they demand it in the public sphere.

### **Discussion of the term**

Ḥusayn argues that when the public demands freedom, they are actually asking for a new and different political system, and that it is not feasible for this to be accomplished at the beginning of the struggle, no matter how fervently it is desired and demanded. Clearly, they are asking for a just and fair political system that can bring about well-being for themselves and the nation. In this text, the writer makes no reference to democracy as a political system because the public may not be aware enough of the modern sense of democracy to call for it.

In his view, people need time and guidance before they can properly conceive of the notion of freedom; they require a wise group of elites to lead and organise them. To achieve this, the elites must be united because otherwise, the victims of their division would be the nation and its people.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> An article published later on 14 September 1938, under the title *al-Dīmuqrāṭiyyah wa asāsuḥā al-tārīkhī* [Democracy and its historical basis], by Jamāl al-Ḥasan, himself a lawyer, introduces the theoretical basis of democracy as a political system and provides examples of the democratic systems in some European countries, including Britain and France. This

## 9.2.2. The central term of human rights

### Term 1: *huqūq al-insān* (human rights)

#### Text

فأنا أنشر تلك الخلاصة، خلاصة حقوق الإنسان للقارئ الإنسان للقارئ الكريم وللقرءاء جميعاً كما هو يريد:

- 1- الناس يلدون [!] <sup>59</sup> ويظلون أحراراً ومتساوون في الحقوق.
- 2- هذه الحقوق هي الحرية والتملك والأمن ومقاومة الجور.
- 3- مبدأ كل سلطة مستقر في الأمة، لا يمكن لأي مجموع أو لأي فرد كان أن يستخدم سلطة غير آتية عنها صراحةً.
- 4- قوام الحرية أن يُستطاع عمل كل ما يضر بالغير.
- 5- لا يحق للقانون أن يمنع غير الأعمال المضرة بالهيئة العامة.
- 6- الشريعة هي مظهر الإرادة العامة ولكل الوطنيين ذاتياً أو بواسطة نوابهم حق الاشتراك في سنّها، ويجب أن تكون واحدة لكل سواء في صون الحقوق أو في العقوبات، ولما كان كل الوطنيين متساوين إزاءها فهم كذلك يُقبلون في كل المراتب والمناصب والوظائف العامة بحسب اقتدارهم وفضائلهم ومواهبهم العقلية.
- 7- لا يمكن الشكوى على أي إنسان كان، أو القبض عليه أو توقيفه إلا في الأحوال المعينة في القانون، وبحسب الكيفية المرسومة فيه.
- 8- لا يسوغ للقانون أن يضع غير العقوبات الضرورية ضرورة أكيدة وصريحة ولا يجوز معاقبة أي كان إلا بموجب قانون وُضع ونُشر وأصبح نافذاً قبل وقوع الجرم وعُمل به على النظام.
- 9- لما كان كل إنسان يعتبر بريئاً إلى أن يُعلن مجرمًا، فإذا ارتُئى وجوب توقيفه واستُعمل بحقه عُنف لم يكن ضرورياً للتأمين من شخصه فعلى القانون أن يعاقب على ذلك بكل شدة.
- 10- لا يجوز تنكيد أي كان بسبب آرائه حتى الدينية منها، مادام إبدائها لا يخل بالنظام العام حسب ما قرره القانون.
- 11- حرية نشر الأفكار والآراء حق من أئمن حقوق الإنسان، فلكل وطني إذن أن يتكلم ويكتب ويطبّع بملء الحرية، إلا أنه مسئول عن خرق هذه الحرية في الأحوال المعينة في القانون.
- 12- ضمان حقوق الإنسان والوطنيين يستلزم قوة عامة.
- 13- يتحتم للقيام بهذه القوة العامة ونفقات الإدارة وضع رسوم عامة يجب توزيعها على كل الوطنيين بالسواء، كل على قدر طاقته.
- 14- يحق لكل الوطنيين أن يتحققوا بالذات أو بواسطة نوابهم لزوم الرسوم العامة، وأن يقبلوا بها عن رضى وأن يحددوا مقدارها ومدتها، وكيفية تقسيمها وتحصيلها، وأن يتتبعوا كيفية صرفها.
- 15- يحق للهيئة العامة أن تسأل كل موظف عام عن إدارته.
- 16- كل هيئة عامة لا يكون فيها ضمان الحقوق مكفولاً، وتفرق السلطة محدوداً فليست هي على شيء من القانون الأساسي.

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article illustrates how and when such ideas of democracy start to be introduced, and the role of educated people in introducing these concepts to the public (al-Ḥasan, 1938).

<sup>59</sup> This should be "يولدون".

17- لما كان التملك حقاً مقدساً لا يُمس فلا يمكن نزعُه عن أي إنسان كان إلا إذا استلزمت ذلك المصلحة العامة استلزماً بيناً ثابتاً شرعاً ويُشترط دفع تعويض عادل مقدماً.

(Barakāt & Salām, 1928)

**Translation** [the Articles of the Declaration of Human and Civic Rights of 26 August 1789 are taken from Conseil Constitutionnel (2002), with slight changes made by the researcher to reflect the Arabic text]<sup>60</sup>

I [Barakāt] publish this summary, the summary of human rights to the honourable reader as well as all other readers as he has requested:

- 1) Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.<sup>61</sup>
- 2) These rights are: Liberty, Property, Safety and Resistance against Oppression.<sup>62</sup>
- 3) The principle of any Sovereignty lies primarily in the Nation. No corporate body, no individual may exercise any authority that does not expressly emanate from it.
- 4) Liberty consists in being able to do anything that does not harm others.<sup>63</sup>
- 5) The Law has **no** right to forbid **other than** those actions that are injurious to society.<sup>64</sup>
- 6) The Law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have the right to take part, personally or through their representatives, in its making. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in its eyes, shall be equally eligible to all high offices, public positions and employments, according to their ability, virtues, and talents.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> In answer to a question from a reader, Barakāt translates the Articles of the Declaration of the Human and Civic Rights, but his text is not a direct or complete translation of these Articles.

<sup>61</sup> Another statement concerning 'social distinctions' is omitted.

<sup>62</sup> The first statement of Article 2, "The aim of every political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of Man", is omitted.

<sup>63</sup> The other statements of the Article are omitted; they mention the 'bounds' of 'the exercise of the natural rights'.

<sup>64</sup> The first statement is, "The Law has the right to forbid only those actions that are injurious to the society." Barakāt did not follow the exact order or structure of the words in the original statement. In the translation of the Arabic text above, I have made slight changes in the English translation of the article (by Conseil Constitutionnel) to produce a closer rendering of the Arabic text as expressed in Barakāt's article. (The words in bold I have added). The other statements of Article 5 have been omitted.

<sup>65</sup> Part of Article 6 has been omitted from the Arabic text.

- 7) No man may be accused, arrested or detained except in the cases determined by the Law, and following the procedure that it has prescribed.<sup>66</sup>
- 8) **It is not justified for the law to** prescribe other than the punishments that are strictly and evidently necessary; and no one may be punished except by virtue of a Law drawn up and promulgated before the offense is committed, and legally applied.<sup>67</sup>
- 9) As every man is presumed innocent until he has been declared guilty, if it should be considered necessary to arrest him, any undue harshness that is not required to secure his person must be severely curbed by Law.
- 10) No one may be disturbed on account of his opinions, even religious ones, as long as the manifestation of such opinions does not interfere with the established Law and Order.
- 11) The **freedom of spreading**<sup>68</sup> of ideas and of opinions is one of the most precious rights of man. Any citizen may therefore speak, write and publish **with all of freedom**,<sup>69</sup> except what is tantamount to the abuse of this liberty in the cases determined by Law.
- 12) To guarantee the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, a public force is necessary.<sup>70</sup>
- 13) For the maintenance of the public force, and for administrative expenses, a general tax is indispensable; it must be equally distributed among all citizens, in proportion to their ability to pay.
- 14) All citizens have the right to ascertain, by themselves or through their representatives, the need for a public tax, to consent to it freely, to watch over its use, and to determine its proportion, basis, collection and duration.
- 15) Society has the right to ask a public official for an accounting of his administration.
- 16) Any society in which no provision is made for guaranteeing rights or for the separation of powers, has no Constitution.

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<sup>66</sup> Another statement is omitted.

<sup>67</sup> There are slight changes on the first statements to reflect the wording of Barakāt. The first statement of the Declaration is actually, "The Law must prescribe only the punishments that are strictly and evidently necessary".

<sup>68</sup> In the English translation of Article 11 of the Declaration, "the free communication".

<sup>69</sup> In the English translation of Article 11 of the Declaration, "freely".

<sup>70</sup> Another statement is omitted.



- 17) Since the right to Property is inviolable and sacred, no one may be deprived thereof, unless public necessity, legally ascertained, obviously requires it, and just and prior indemnity has been paid.

### Cultural and linguistic context

Although the text above is lengthy, it is of crucial importance to this research. It is one of the rare texts that deals directly and explicitly with the concept of *ḥuqūq al-insān* (human rights), and it helps to clearly determine the semantic elements of the term in a way that demonstrates how the term was understood over time. It articulates not merely this general concept but also the way that it was introduced and explained to the Arabic reader, thus conveying connotative meanings that are very much related to the cultural and political circumstances of that time.

The front page of *Al-Ahrām* on 18 July 1928 displays a Letter to the Editor (Dāwūd Barakāt, d. 1933) by °A. M. Salām (who refers to himself as “one of the pupils of *Al-Ahrām*”). The reader asks a question on *Ḥuqūq al-insān: mā hiya wa mā huwa aṣluhā wa mā ḥikmatuhā* [Human rights: What is it? What is its origin and what is its wisdom?], referring to an earlier article by Barakāt on the French National Day.<sup>71</sup> In the view of Salām, that admirable article on the philosophy of human rights and constitutional rule “is what made *Al-Ahrām* a school where the public opinion receives [its] most lofty and most promoted lessons.” Salām also asks the writer to further articulate the notion of human rights to the Egyptian public because the earlier article, Salām claims, was unclear and helpful only to the few Egyptians who were familiar with constitutional studies and had studied the history of the revolution. Salām further justifies his request by saying that “a means of conveying science from the knowledgeable to the ignorant is not available.”

This correspondence is important for understanding and contextualising the development of the term *ḥuqūq al-insān* (human rights), and also for justifying the decision made to consider *Al-Ahrām* as a primary source of data in this

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<sup>71</sup> Bastille Day, 14 July, commemorates the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille prison at the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789.

research, since *Al-Ahrām* is shown to be a valuable means of introducing these ideas to the public.

The writer, asked to articulate the idea of human rights to the public, says that this broad and important topic cannot be explained satisfactorily in a political piece, so he chooses to do so by translating the seventeen Articles of the Declaration of Human and Civic Rights, approved by the French National Assembly in August 1789 and considered to be fundamental to the history of human rights. It is apparent that Barakāt's summary of the seventeen Articles reflects his concerns about Egyptian society; thus it is very relevant to this research.

The writer refers to these principles as the main components of the concept of human rights. This clearly suggests the generalisation of the concepts, which is an important aspect of their development. Unlike with al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, who was keen to articulate a restricted vision of freedom for the Arabic reader, the rights now become universalised and seemingly less subject to cultural restrictions.

### **Discussion of the term**

Barakāt introduces the concept of human rights to his Egyptian readers by providing an abridged translation of the Articles of the Declaration of Human and Civic Rights. He includes the main sentences but omits other parts, tailoring his translation for the concerns and experiences of his Egyptian readers.

In his translation of Article 1, he omits the second statement, "Social distinctions may be based only on considerations of the common good", leaving the focus on the notion of human beings being and remaining free. 'Social classification' seems less of a priority for a society which has long been suffering under the political and economic oppression of a dictatorial power. When members of the general public suffer equally from oppression, the main distinction is confined to the ruler and subjects. The writer, giving a brief lesson on human rights, prioritises the central idea of freedom and looks at what people are directly entitled to, rather than introducing additional concepts that might undermine the central idea.

The apprehension about the authorities restricting freedom is demonstrated in his translation of Article 5, where he provides a 'negative definition' (see 4.1.4)

of what the law is entitled to do, by stating what it is not entitled to do – namely, "The Law has **no** right to forbid **other than** those actions that are injurious to society" (rather than saying in positive terms that the mission of the law is "to forbid only those actions that are injurious to society", which is a direct translation of the original French text).

One final note should be made about his translation of "the free communication of ideas and of opinions" as "the freedom of spreading ideas and of opinions". In the original Arabic, the difference is that the subject of the first statement involves the action (i.e., communication), whereas the subject in the latter is a nominal compound that indicates a new term of freedom: *hurriyyat nashr al-afkār*. This, I argue, indicates the distance between the practice of a type of freedom that is enjoyed and actually exists, and a concept that exists only at the lexical and theoretical level.

### 9.2.3. Terms of personal freedoms

**Term 1:** *hurriyyah shakhsiyyah* (personal freedom)

#### **Text**

فنحن نكرر أننا مستقلون قانوناً استقلالاً تاماً؛ مصرنا وسوداننا في ذلك سواء. ليبقوا في بلادنا ظالمين بقوة المدافع، ولكننا لا نعاونهم في حكمها مختارين، ثم ليخنقوا حريتنا الشخصية كما هم يخنقون حريتنا السياسية، ثم ليعتقلوا من يريدون وليقتلوا من يصادفون، فإننا، ونحن قوم غُزِل، قد صممنا نهائياً على أن لا ننزل عن استقلالنا التام ولا نعتزف لهم صريحاً أو ضمناً بأي حق على مصر، ولا أن نعتبر مركزهم فيها إلا مركز غاصب لا حق له في البقاء.

(Maḥmūd et al., 1922)

#### **Translation** [translated by the researcher]

We reiterate that we are legally and completely independent, and our Egypt as well as our Sudan are the same in this regard. Let them [i.e., the British] stay in our lands as oppressors through force of arms, yet we will never willingly help them to govern. Let them stifle our personal freedoms as they do our political freedom, and then let them arrest whoever they want to, and kill whomsoever they come across. We – and we are a defenceless people – are completely determined not to surrender our independence, and to not recognise, explicitly or implicitly, any rights they claim to have in Egypt. Furthermore, we do not regard their position on the land [as anything] except usurpers who have no right to remain there.

## Cultural and linguistic context

This text is taken from a statement of *Al-Wafd al-Miṣrī* [the Egyptian Delegation] published in *Al-Ahrām* on 2 January 1922, after the British arrest of Saʿd Zaghlūl and a group of his comrades on 23 December 1921, and their subsequent banishment to the Seychelles.

This incident came after a huge wave of public protests against a draft agreement between Egypt and Britain, which was submitted by the British Foreign Secretary George Curzon (d. 1925) to the Egyptian Prime Minister ʿAdlī Yakan (d. 1933) on 10 November 1921. This draft was described by al-Rāfiʿī (1987c) as a confirmation of the settlement of the military occupation “in any place in the country for an unlimited time”; he said that it contained terms that “demolish the meanings of independence” (p. 32). Earlier, on 8 December 1921, Prime Minister ʿAdlī, who had been involved in the negotiations with the British, submitted his resignation to the king in protest at the British draft of the agreement.

Saʿd Zaghlūl published a call to the nation, urging them to continue their struggle towards independence and inciting them against the occupation. He announced a public meeting, to be held on 23 December 1921, and invited Egyptian public figures whom the British authorities had prevented from speaking. The British gave Zaghlūl an ultimatum: end the political protest, cease and desist from political participation, whether in writing or otherwise, and leave Cairo. When he refused, they arrested him immediately and sent him into exile.

The text above includes two types of freedom: *ḥurriyyah shakhṣiyyah* (personal freedom) and *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom), which have been used in a contrastive manner to convey two different meanings, one involving the nation and the other involving individuals. Actions that would confiscate either type of freedom mentioned in the paragraph can be inferred from the intended meaning of each term.

## Discussion of the term

The term *ḥurriyyah shakhṣiyyah* (personal freedom) is used in contrast to the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom). The text, produced under military occupation, links personal freedom with being free from arrest and from

extrajudicial killing – the two main risks that threaten people under military occupation, and the most fundamental to well-being. It can be inferred that the former term refers to individual freedoms, while the latter refers to the political independence of the nation.

**Term 2: *ḥurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion)**

**First text**

خير للجنس اللطيف، يا آنسة، أن يعنى الآن بتربية الأطفال على تقدير حرية الرأي، وعلى تقدير حسن الاختيار وعلى تقدير استقلال الفكر، حتى إذا كبروا وترعرعوا وأصبحوا "ناخبين" أو "مندوبين ناخبين" لم يهضموا حقوق ذوي الحقوق، وأفسحوا المجال لذوي التاريخ وذوي الكفاءة بدون تعب وبدون عناء، وحينئذ يصح لـ"الجنس اللطيف" دخول المعركة.

(Abāzah, 1923)

**Translation [translated by the researcher]**

O Madam, it is better that the fair sex currently takes care of raising children to appreciate freedom of opinion, and appreciate the proper choice of a candidate, and appreciate independence of thought. Once they grow up and become voters and even representatives of the people, they will not deny the rights of the people, and they will grant opportunities to experienced and competent people of without hindrance. Once they have achieved this, it will be right for the fair sex to enter the fray.

**Second text**

[...] ودُعي بعده الدكتور علي العناني فتكلم عن الحرية ووصفها بأنها طريق السعادة، ثم بحث في شروط الكفاءة والإخلاص وقال أن الإخلاص يكون بالعمل لا بالقول ولا بشهادة ممن "يدعي الزعامة" وأعاد هذا القول مرتين، فقاطعه شاب من الحاضرين قائلاً: "أنصح؛ من هو الزعيم الذي الذي تعني بذلك: "يدعي الزعامة"، فلم يجب الخطيب على هذا السؤال فأعيد عليه مرة أخرى، واشترك مع الشاب السائل شاب آخر، ولما لم يجيبهما الدكتور العناني وفقاً وصاحا: ليحيى سعد! فحدث هرج ومرج وطفق الشبان يناديان بحياة سعد باشا، وحاول بعضهم إخراج الشابين بالقوة، فوقف أحد الطلبة وصاح أن احترموا حرية الرأي، فهؤلاء لهم زعماء وأبطال يحترمونها، وإنما نحن هنا للدفاع عن حرية الرأي. فلم يجد كلامه أذناً صاغية، وألقى بعضهم الماء والشاي على رأس أحد الشابين، وتدخل البوليس في الأمر فكان تدخله مانعاً للآذى، وبعد أن أخرج الشبان وهداً الجو واصل الدكتور العناني خطابه فصفق له السامعون.

(Anṣār ḥurriyyat al-ra'y, 1923)

**Translation [translated by the researcher]**

Then Dr. °Alī al-°Inānī was invited to speak, and his talk was about freedom, which he described as the way to happiness. He then discussed the conditions of capability and loyalty, and said that loyalty is in actions and not in words, and not even by a mere statement of loyalty by he who "claims leadership". He repeated

this twice. He was then interrupted by a young man from the audience, “Advise us as to who this leader is that you speak of?” The speaker did not respond. The question was repeated once more, and another young man joined the first in asking. When Dr. al-<sup>o</sup>Inānī failed to respond again, the two young men stood up and shouted, “Long live Sa<sup>o</sup>d!” A state of commotion broke out, and the youths continued calling for the long life of Sa<sup>o</sup>d Pasha, which caused some people to try and force the two out of the hall. A student then stood and called out, asking people to respect freedom of opinion, as the two youths had leaders and heroes that they respected, and the whole point of the gathering was to defend freedom of opinion. No one heard this student’s pleas, and some people began to throw tea and water onto the head of one of the young men. The police intervened and prevented the trouble from escalating. After the two youths were expelled, Dr. al-<sup>o</sup>Inānī continued his lecture, and the audience applauded him.

### **Cultural and linguistic context**

Interestingly, both these texts are found on the same page of *Al-Ahrām* on 20 October 1923. Both include the term *ḥurriyyat al-ra’y* (freedom of opinion) and thus contribute to an understanding of how people conceive of this concept in real life. Both texts describe incidents involving public activities such as meetings and elections. The campaign for parliamentary elections extended from April 1923 (when the constitution and the law of elections were issued) until Election Day on 12 January 1923. It was described by al-Rāfi<sup>o</sup>ī (1987c), who was himself a candidate, as “a long-term, fiercely contested battle” (p. 170).

The first text here is taken from an article written by Fikrī Abāḏah, an Egyptian lawyer and politician who stood for election to parliament. This is his reply to an article by Munīrah Thābit, the lawyer, feminist, and political activist who claimed women’s right to vote and to be elected as members of the parliament.<sup>72</sup> Abāḏah, who seems uninterested in women’s participation, refers to the men’s struggle to participate in the elections, in which they encountered obstacles of their own, to argue for the general lack of eligibility in the society.

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<sup>72</sup> Section 9.2.1 discussed a text from a 1925 article by Munīrah Thābit; this refers to a different article.

Earlier in his article, Abāḏah gives examples of the struggles that electoral candidates face; these include being waylaid by hooligans, having children throw stones at them, being spoken of badly by women who are incited by competitors, and coming under investigation because of complaints submitted by rivals.<sup>73</sup>

The second text is a newspaper report of a public meeting organised by *Jamā'at Anṣār Ḥurriyyat al-Ra'y* (The Society of Supporters of Freedom of Opinion) and held in the Nasyūnal Hotel. It was attended by “a large number of students, journalists, lawyers, and a group of scholars”, according to the newspaper account, and it included speeches delivered by a group of PhDs, a student, and politicians. There were terrible confrontations among those in attendance after some youths objected to a speaker’s criticism of the nationalist leader Sa’d Zaghlūl (Pasha).

Both texts include a description of the context, which helps to understand how people act in the public sphere in relation to freedom of opinion.

It is worth noting that in both texts – as well as the other texts of this period<sup>74</sup> – the term ‘freedom of opinion’ is actually used to mean freedom to *express* opinions because of course, one is always free to *have* opinions (e.g., in one’s head, to be shared with family, etc.); the issue is being free to share them publicly, both verbally and in print. The term is mentioned in a social context involving people’s interaction in public; in most cases it deals with political debate or discussions, with no reference to legally protected rights. This has implications for its associated entitlements, where ‘freedom of opinion’ is always

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<sup>73</sup> The term *ḥaqq al-intikhāb* (the right to vote) was mentioned here to refer to a constitutional right that restricted men from voting and choosing their (male) representatives in the parliament or was cited with a less positive meaning when Abāḏah said, in his response to Thābit:

“خير لك أن تستريح يا آنسة، و احمدي الله على أن الدستور حرم النساء من حق الانتخاب ودخول مجلس النواب”.

“It is better for you, madam, to relax and thank God that the Constitution forbids women from the right to elect and to enter the parliament.”

<sup>74</sup> In an editorial entitled *Ta'āwun lā hizbiyyah* [Cooperation not partisanship], published 25 May 1936, the term *ḥurriyyat al-qawl* (freedom of speech) was used in reference to the members of parliament. Dr Aḥmad Māhir (d. 1945), who had just been elected president of the parliament, thanked the council and promised to work towards respecting *ḥurriyyat al-qawl* (freedom of speech), which would serve all members of the council equally (Ta'āwun lā hizbiyyah, 1936; cf. 'Abduh's concept of *ḥurriyyat al-qawl* in the second period, in 7.2.5).

affected by the social context, as people are the ones who enact this right (cf. al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's behavioural freedom, Section 5.2.2). When people are not eligible for this right, or they do not even understand it, the concept is likely to be distorted and practised in a way not originally intended.

### Discussion of the term

Both texts refer to *ḥurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion) as the right of individuals to express their personal views on political affairs without being prevented or harmed by those with opposing views. This implicitly suggests a negative situation, where people are prevented and harmed from expressing their views, yet the call to appreciate freedom of opinion contributes to an understanding of what was originally intended.

No restrictions are articulated concerning what these opinions should be; in the abstract, this implies that no restrictions are expected, no matter what opinions are expressed. This indicates a development since the previous period, when freedom of expression was always linked with views that were 'good' and 'useful'. As the texts illustrate, the term was nearly always a principle rather than an actual practice.

### Third text

وفي 28 فبراير سنة 1922 ألغيت الحماية، وأعلنت مصر دولة مستقلة ذات سيادة، وألفت لجنة لوضع الدستور، يعينها هنا من أمرها مناقشاتها حول حرية الصحافة تمهيداً لوضع المادتين (14 و15) من الدستور؛ وتجريان بالنص التالي:

"حرية الرأي مكفولة، ولكل إنسان الإعراب عن فكره بالقول أو الكتابة أو بالتصوير أو بغير ذلك في حدود القانون

(Diyāb, 1935)

**Translation** [translated by the researcher except the Article of the Constitution (ConstitutionNet, n.d.), with changes by the researcher]<sup>75</sup>

On 28 February 1922, Egypt's protectorate status was cancelled, and Egypt was declared an independent and sovereign state. A committee was established to write the Constitution, and what concerns us here is that it held discussions regarding the freedom

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<sup>75</sup> I was unable to find an official translation for this document, so I have used this unofficial translation by Joy Ghali on behalf of International IDEA ([www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)).



of the press as a precursor to Articles 14 and 15<sup>76</sup> of the Constitution, which states:

Freedom of opinion shall be ensured, and each person may express their thoughts through speech, writing, photographic or artistic depiction, or otherwise within the boundaries of the law.

### Cultural and linguistic context

In an article on 9 January 1935, titled *al-Ṣaḥāfah wa ḥurriyyatuhā* [The press and its freedom], Muḥammad Tawfīq Diyāb (d. 1936), a journalist, writer, and national activist, reviews the history of press freedom in Egypt from the 1860s up to the year of publication, 1935. The article, which occupies six columns in the newspaper, is a written version of a speech he delivered in a public conference regarding journalism.

The writer mentions two Articles of the Constitution of 1923, which define two related freedoms: *ḥurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion) and *ḥurriyyat al-ṣaḥāfah* (freedom of the press). The link between the two is clear, since newspapers are a medium of expression. The Articles quoted in the text indicate the intended semantic range of entitlements.

### Discussion of the term

*Ḥurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion), as stated in the constitution, entitles people to express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions through different means, including speech, writing, illustration, or otherwise. This right should be consistent with the law.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Article 15 is cited and discussed later in Section 9.2.6.

<sup>77</sup> This is what was stated in the Constitution, but in an editorial on 6 October 1936, entitled *Ḥurriyyat al-ra'y makfūlah fi ḥudūd al-qānūn: Hākadhā yaqūl al-dustūr* [Freedom of opinion is ensured within the limits of law], the writer criticises the absence of this freedom in reality (*Ḥurriyyat al-ra'y makfūlah*, 1936). Another article entitled *Istiqlāl al-ra'y* [The Independence of opinion], published 5 November 1937, was written “on the occasion of the convening of Parliament”, as stated in the subtitle, to be held on 18 November 1937. The writer, Egyptian lawyer Sābā Ḥabashī (d. 1996), criticises “the chains that restrict the freedom of an MP” from expressing opinions that opposed either the governing party, his own party or his electors (Ḥabashī, 1937). Both debates involved freedom of opinion, which was provided by the Constitution of 1923 (twelve to thirteen years earlier); discussions on these articles indicate the absence of this freedom in practice; hence no further changes in the entitlements are suggested. The meaning of the term was static; no semantic development was involved and,

### Term 3: *hurriyyat al-ijtimāʿ*<sup>c</sup> (freedom of assembly)

#### Text

واليوم نقول أن نص المادة العشرين يقي حرية الاجتماع مهددة ومعرضة لنفس المخاطر التي التي بقيت هذه الحرية معرضة لها تحت الأحكام العرفية البريطانية نفسها التي لم تكن معروفة في مصر حتى في عهد التحكم والاستبداد الفردي .

(<sup>c</sup>Azmī, 1923)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

Today, we say that Article 20 shows that freedom of assembly remains under threat from the same dangers that these freedoms opposed under British martial law, and that were alien to Egypt even during the oppressive reign of authoritarian rulers.

#### Cultural and linguistic context

On 3 April 1922, a commission of thirty prominent Egyptian figures, including politicians, economists, intellectuals, legal experts, scholars, community leaders and clerics, was established and charged with producing a draft of the first constitution since the revolution. The new constitution was submitted to the Prime Minister on 21 October 1922 and was issued on 19 April 1923.

This article, published on 24 April 1923, is one of a series by Maḥmūd <sup>c</sup>Azmī (d. 1954), a writer, politician, and activist who presented his views on the constitution under the title *Raʾy fī al-dustūr* [An opinion on the constitution]. He addresses two notions: freedom of assembly and the protection of minorities, criticising what he sees as deficiencies in the constitution. He claims that freedom of assembly, as set out in the constitution, is still threatened as it was under British martial law, and that the threat is even worse than it was when Egypt was ruled by a dictatorship.

The above text does not refer to *hurriyyat al-ijtimāʿ*<sup>c</sup> (freedom of assembly), so it is necessary to quote the text of the constitution itself.

مادة 20 :للمصريين حق الاجتماع في هدوء وسكينة غير حاملين سلاحاً. وليس لأحد من رجال البوليس أن يحضر اجتماعاتهم، ولا حاجة بهم إلى إشعاره. لكن هذا الحكم لا يجري في

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as can be seen from the article, these freedoms were discussed in theory, but in practice, they were clearly absent.

الاجتماعات العامة فإنها خاضعة لأحكام القانون. كما لا يقيد أو يمنع أي تدبير يتخذ لوقاية النظام الاجتماعي

(al-Mutawallī, 2002, p. 91)

**Translation** [Translation from (ConstitutionNet, n.d.), with one change by the researcher]

Article 20: Egyptians shall have the right to assemble<sup>78</sup> in calmness and serenity, unarmed. No police personnel may attend their meetings, and they need not inform them of such. However, such provision shall not apply to public gatherings, which shall be subject to the provisions of the law, and shall not restrict or prevent any measure taken to safeguard social order.

### Discussion of the term

°Azmī criticises the freedom of assembly because it pertains only to private gatherings in private places, where people are not armed. In reality, these gatherings are subject to intervention by the authorities at any time, under the pretext of maintaining social order. It is clearly a restricted type of freedom that does not apply to public gatherings, which the police are given unlimited powers to prevent or control.<sup>79</sup>

The new Constitution of 1923 may have contributed to extending the terms of freedom, yet extension of the rights that people were actually entitled to was questionable. The discussion of the term, and the writer's criticism of it, indicate that the argument involving entitlements now was almost the same as the argument which existed during the period of occupation.

At the lexical level, there has been development in the terms of freedom, but at the semantic level, the semantic range of the terms hardly includes any meaningful extension.

#### 9.2.4. Terms of religious freedoms

**Term 1:** *hurriyyat al-adyān* (freedom of beliefs)

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<sup>78</sup> In the translation at ConstitutionNet, Ghali translates this as 'gather'.

<sup>79</sup> The Central Committee of Al-Wafd in Suez issued a statement, published in *Al-Ahrām* on 7 September 1925 under the title *Ḥurriyyat al-ijtimāʿ*<sup>c</sup> [Freedom of assembly], protesting the "violation of freedom of assembly". It states that "the police attacked the home of His Honour, Muṣṭafā Hāshim, adjourned the Committee's meeting by force;" it further states that "the committee asked the prosecution to hold an investigation into the matter to maintain the law and respect freedom" (Kamāl, 1925).

## Text

[...] وبما ورد فيه [أي في البند السادس من الاتفاق] من أن الجمعية الوطنية يُعهد إليها بمهمة "وضع قانون نظامي جديد تسير حكومة مصر في المستقبل بمقتضى أحكامه، ويتضمن هذا النظام أحكاماً تقضي بجعل الوزراء مسئولين أمام الهيئة التشريعية وتقضي أيضاً بحرية الأديان لجميع الأشخاص، وبالحماية الواجبة لحقوق الأجانب.

(al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād, 1920)

## Translation [translated by the researcher]

That which has been stated within [i.e., in the sixth Article of the Milner Agreement] is that the National Assembly is entrusted with the task of "establishing a new statute that organises the processes and procedures of the Egyptian government in the future within the legal framework. This statute includes laws stating that ministers are responsible before the legislature, guarantee freedom of religion to each individual, and ensure the protection of the rights of foreigners.

## Cultural and linguistic context

This text is taken from an article discussing the draft of the Milner agreement between England and Egypt (see Section 9.2.1). The article, published on 21 August 1920 by <sup>°</sup>Abbās Maḥmūd al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād – a lawyer, politician, intellectual, and linguist – was one of a series entitled *Ra'y fī al-ittifāq* [An opinion on the agreement], written as a response to the Wafdist calls for Egyptians to express their views. The agreement recognised Egypt's independence but nevertheless retained British protection, and it granted Britain the rights it needed to protect its private interests and its citizens in Egypt.

This particular article in the series, subtitled *Mas'ūliyyat al-wazārah – al-sulṭah al-khārijīyyah* [The responsibility of the government – external authority], focuses on conditions stating that this draft should be presented to a constituent assembly, which would then be in charge of establishing new statutes that ensure freedom of belief for every person, as well as protecting the rights of foreigners.

In the above text, al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād quotes from the final draft, which mentions the term *ḥurriyyat al-adyān* (freedom of beliefs) in the context of political rights for European citizens, so it appears that the motivation for explicitly defining it has to do with the interests of British citizens in Egypt. They could be employers or

military officers, who were in the country mainly to serve the interests of the occupying power – interests that contradicted the national interests of the state (cf. Section 5.2.3, regarding al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's concept of religious freedom).

### Discussion of the term

Clearly, the term *ḥurriyyat al-adyān* (freedom of beliefs) is used to convey, in an unrestricted manner, the freedom for every person to convert to any religion or belief.

### 9.2.5. Terms of economic freedom and rights

#### Term 1: *ḥurriyyat al-tijārah* (freedom of trade)

##### Text

فتصرّف الجمارك لا يقبله الحق ولا تؤيده حرية التجارة، خصوصاً وأن الانكليز هم في مقدمة الأمم لتقدير حرية التجارة، حتى أنهم كانوا أول من عامل الألمان معاملة تجارية وفق مبادئ الحرية في التجارة، فإن المنافسة التجارية شرط من شروط الحرية الاقتصادية، فإذا قُيدت هذه المنافسة اختلّت معها الأصول التجارية وسادت الفوضى في المعاملات.

(Taymūr, 1919)

##### Translation [translated by the researcher]

The conduct of Customs and Excise is consistent with neither justice nor the principles of free trade. This is especially so because the English are at the forefront of nations who appreciate free trade, indeed being the first to deal with the Germans according to the principles of free trade. Commercial competition is one of the conditions of economic freedom, and if this competition were restricted, then this would disrupt business fundamentals, and chaos would reign over commercial deals.

##### Cultural and linguistic context

Under the title *Al-Fawḍā fī tijāratinā* [Chaos in our trade], Ḥusayn Taymūr, lawyer and national activist, published an article on 21 October 1919, on the front page of *Al-Ahrām*. In it, he criticises restrictions imposed by the Egyptian government (and influenced by British financial consultants) on imports and exports. These restrictions, set up to act according to what were known as 'principles toward the Allies', mandated that any export or import of goods receive permission from the British authority's War Trade Department in Egypt's

*Dār al-ḥimāyah* (in the British Embassy). The writer describes these restrictions as “illegal and unfair because they enact laws and regulations which are not consistent with freedom of trade.”

At that time, Egypt’s financial and economic affairs were controlled by Britain. The writer begins by introducing the struggle of Egyptian traders under the economic regulations imposed during World War I. He then states that, under the pretext of protecting British interests, the occupation’s authority took “bad actions” and followed procedures which have led to chaos in economic and trade activities and regulations, and this caused harm to individual traders.

Taymūr indicates that this chaos remained even after the war, and he provides examples of the restrictions imposed on imports and exports. He alleges that certain leading traders were controlling the movement of some goods, preventing exports and manipulating trade according to their own interests. Moreover, he contends that the British authorities were also involved, imposing taxes on goods imported by countries like Germany because they were the enemies of Britain’s allies. In making his argument, he states that this breached the right to freedom of trade and also prevented competition, one of the key principles of trade.

The writer points out that England was one of the first nations to recognise the principle of freedom of trade. In contrast to the argument made earlier by ʿAbduh – that economic freedom was recognised by the West due to its cultural interaction with the East during the Crusades, Taymūr suggests that this freedom was introduced to the East through its interaction with the West.

Linguistically, the article includes phrases that can be employed to understand what the writer intends when referring to ‘freedom of trade’. When he criticises actions or behaviours that prevent freedom of trade, one can infer what he believes should be allowed by the freedom of trade.

### **Discussion of the term**

The article states that free trade “means that everyone should enjoy the consequences of lifting restrictions on trade issues”. The term ‘freedom of trade’ is used in the sense that other countries are free from governments imposing

tariffs on imports or exports. The result will have an impact on opening markets to commercial competition.

**Term 2:** *hurriyyah iqtisādiyyah* (economic freedom)

**Text**

وَهُمُ الَّذِينَ نَدْعُو لِيَلْبُوا نَدَاءَ جَمْعِيَةِ الْاِسْتِقْلَالِ الْاِقْتِصَادِيِّ، فَيَضَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِي أَيْدِي الَّذِينَ نَذَرُوا حَيَاتَهُمْ وَجُوهَدَهُمْ لِحُرِّيَّةِ مِصْرَ الْعَمَلِيَّةِ، حُرِّيَّةِ التِّجَارَةِ وَالصَّنَاعَةِ الْمَحَلِّيَّةِ ، وَطَنْ يَكْدُ أَهْلُهُ وَيَكْدَحُونَ ثُمَّ هُمْ مَا زَالُوا لَا يَسْتَوْعِبُونَ ثَمَارَ مَا يَغْرُسُونَ وَمَا يَصْنَعُونَ!!

إِنَّا نُنَادِيكُمْ، لَا؛ بَلْ هِيَ مِصْرُ هِيَ الَّتِي تَنَادِيكُمْ أَنْ تَنْظُمُوا صُفُوفَ الْحُرِّيَّةِ الْاِقْتِصَادِيَّةِ فِي كُلِّ نَاحِيَةٍ مِنْ نَوَاحِي الْبِلَادِ، ثُمَّ عَلَيْنَا أَنْ نُوَحِّدَ الصُّفُوفَ تَحْتَ لَوَاءِ (جَمْعِيَةِ الْاِسْتِقْلَالِ الْاِقْتِصَادِيِّ) الَّتِي نَشَأَتْ وَلِيدَةً الْحَاجَةِ إِلَى الْجِهَادِ الْعَمَلِيِّ الْمُنْتَجِ، لَا تَعْرِفُ فِي جِهَادِهَا رِيحَ السِّيَاسَةِ وَلَا تَمِيلُ لَخُطَّةٍ مِنْ خُطَطِهَا [وَلَا] إِلَى عَقِيدَةٍ مِنَ الْعَقَائِدِ، إِلَّا عَقِيدَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ هِيَ الْاِحْتِفَاطُ بِثَرَوَةِ مِصْرَ لِلْأُمَّةِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ.

(Maḥmūd, 1932, p. 2)

**Translation** [translated by the researcher]

It is they [the youth of Egypt] whom we invite to meet the call of the Association of Economic Independence, so they put their hands in the hands of those who have devoted their lives and their efforts to Egypt's freedom of work; that is the freedom of local trade and industry. The home where her people work tirelessly and toil yet fail to recognise the benefits of what they are planting and making!!

We call you, nay, it is Egypt who calls you, to stage economic freedom in every part of the country; then we have to unite under the banner of the Association of Economic Independence, which originated as a result of the need for perseverance in productive work [in the association] that does not involve politics in any way, and does not have any tendency to any political projects or doctrines, except one only, that is, to keep the wealth of Egypt for the Arab nation.

**Cultural and linguistic context**

Under the title *Al-Istiqlāl al-iqtisādī; Ayyuhā al-shabāb al-nābihūn* [The economic independence; O intelligent awakening youths], Ḥāfiẓ Maḥmūd, a nationalist activist and journalist, published an article on 12 March 1932 urging Egyptian youth to work towards economic freedom and independence, which he considers to be the basis for all other types of freedom in the twentieth century.

Maḥmūd was the founder and representative of the Association of Economic Independence, which aimed to raise national awareness, especially among youth, about local industry and small businesses as a means of local independence. He argued that the political power of a nation is derived from its economic power (see Riḍwān, 1988, pp. 410-419).

This call coincided with an acute economic crisis from which Egypt suffered from late 1930 to late 1934. Cotton prices fell significantly, followed by a drop in the prices of agricultural products in general. Al-Rāfiʿī (1949/1988) notes that “these were really lean years, in which people suffered from most economic and financial types of distress” (p. 177).

Here Maḥmūd refers to the concept of economic freedom in a national sense; he is interested in raising the national output by empowering labour in the fields of trade and manufacturing, for the benefit of the entire country. Individuals are not referred to explicitly, but in this context, empowering labour necessarily involves improving the lot of individual workers. The writer uses several terms to refer to the idea of ‘economic freedom’, including *ḥurriyyat Miṣr al-ʿamaliyyah* (Egypt’s freedom to work, referring to Egypt as a nation) and *ḥurriyyat al-tijārah wa al-ṣināʿah al-maḥaliyyah* (freedom of local trade and industry). Again, the term refers to the local area (Egypt); obviously, this type of freedom involves a national orientation.

It is interesting to note that although his main reason for calling for a strengthened economy is because it is the basis of other types of freedom and independence, Maḥmūd states, in an apparent contradiction, that this has nothing to do with politics. His avoidance of any connection between economic activities and politics is most likely a reflection of the restrictions on what he is allowed to say and do.

### **Discussion of the terms**

In this article, the author refers to ‘economic freedom’ as the liberation of the national economy, which could be achieved by raising the productivity of workers in the fields of trade, agriculture, and manufacturing. The heart of the matter is that worker productivity is a main contributor to the national output.



Thus economic freedom involves productive labour, which has an impact on the well-being, prosperity and independence of the nation.

**Term 3: *ḥuqūq al-ʿummāl* (labour rights)**

**Text**

فسبيل الحزب الاشتراكي أن يقتفي أثر الاشتراكية الإنجليزية، وأن يعمد إلى الرفق واللف في زيادة حقوق العمال، ورفع أجورهم وتعليمهم، وهذه أشياء لن يصل إليها إلا برضى الملاك وهم أصحاب النفوذ الآن في الحكومة وفي غير الحكومة.

(Mūsā, 1922)

**Translation [translated by the researcher]**

The way of the Socialist party is to follow the path of English Socialism, and to resort to gentleness and kindness to increase the rights of labourers, raise their wages and educate them. These things cannot be attained except by consent of owners, who are the influential people in the government and elsewhere nowadays.

**Cultural and linguistic context**

Salāma Mūsā, a socialist, secular journalist and political writer, in an article entitled *al-Ishtirākīyyah wa al-Shuyūʿīyyah* [Socialism and Communism], on 19 August 1922, calls for what he sees as realism and moderation in demanding rights for labourers. He claims that the word *thawrah* (revolution) is “pointless and empty of meaning”, and that instead of bringing about any benefits for labourers, it actually justifies the influence and power of the employers and owners. He seems to be attempting to persuade farmers to resist the calls urging them to revolt against landowners.

The so-called socialist writer seems to be interested in producing a realistic vision of socialism, which takes a ‘friendly’ approach to demands that do not harm the owners, restrict their power, or guarantee any rights. This unambiguously demonstrates that the contribution from political intellectuals and intellectual trends in raising awareness and demanding rights was modest (cf. Section 9.2.8).

**Discussion of the term**

Clearly the term *ḥuqūq al-ʿummāl* (labour rights) in the text refers to increasing levels of income and education. These are rights that cannot be compelled by

the power of law but only with the consent of the employers, who hold power and authority. In this context, the term has a connotative meaning that involves improving the standard of living to reach a minimally acceptable level. Nothing specific is mentioned about fixed, clear entitlements such as working hours, thus social demands – rather than actual legal rights – appear to be the goal.

#### 9.2.6. Terms of intellectual freedoms and rights

**Term 1:** *ḥurriyyat al-ṣaḥāfah* (freedom of the press)

##### **Text**<sup>80</sup>

الصحافة حرة في حدود القانون، والرقابة على الصحف محظورة، وإنذار الصحف أو وقفها أو إلغاؤها بالطريق الإداري محظور كذلك إلا إذا كان ضرورياً لوقاية النظام الاجتماعي.

(Diyāb, 1935)

**Translation** [translation taken from (ConstitutionNet, n.d.)]

The press shall be free within the limits of the law. Censorship of newspapers shall be prohibited. Warning, suspension, or cancellation of papers via administrative means shall also be prohibited unless necessary for protecting social order.

##### **Cultural and linguistic context**

As noted previously, Muḥammad Tawfīq Diyāb, in his article *al-Ṣaḥāfah wa ḥurriyyatuhā* [The press and its freedom], on 9 January 1935, reviews the history of press freedom in Egypt over about seventy years (see 9.2.3).

What is relevant here is that the term in question, *ḥurriyyat al-ṣaḥāfah* (freedom of the press), is mentioned for the first time in the article in the context of the Constitution of 1923. The writer praises the period that contributed to the development of freedom of the press at different points of time and, in turn, criticises restrictions on this freedom.

The article includes quotes from discussions by members of the constitutional committee which indicate – the writer argues – an intense zeal and eagerness on their part for the restoration of press freedom. One member goes so far as to say that “freedom of the press is the first manifestation of all other types of

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<sup>80</sup> This text is Article 15 of Egypt's Constitution of 1923.

freedoms,” and others state that this freedom should have no restrictions or conditions, arguing that “freedom is capable of organising as well as developing itself [...] toward what is more useful to the fittest.”

On the other hand, the writer has strong words of criticism for the period of press persecution and restrictions in the era of Ṣidqī Pasha (d. 1950), the Prime Minister (1930-1933) who abolished the Constitution of 1923 and issued a new one on 22 October 1930.<sup>81</sup> He completely abolished some newspapers, arrested journalists, and issued laws involving restrictions on the press.

The discussion of such a term is clearly limited to what was stated in the constitution issued twelve years earlier; this indicates a sustained debate on the situation of freedom since the constitution was established.

### Discussion of the term

*Ḥurriyyat al-ṣaḥāfah* (freedom of the press) is intended to entitle newspapers to be free of censorship, warnings, or administrative suspension or cancellation, and it is intended to ensure freedom of expression. This confirms the link between freedom of opinion and freedom of press in the text above. Although the text of the article, as well as related discussions, favours ensuring press freedom, there is also a legal requirement to do what is necessary to protect and preserve the social order.

### Term 2: *huqūq al-mu'allifīn* (authors' rights)

#### Text

وكنا نود أن يكون التشريع المصري سباقاً إلى هذه الغاية، لأن مصر أحوج ما تكون إلى تشجيع النهضة العلمية والأدبية فيها، والسبيل الوحيد لتشجيع هذه النهضة هو حماية حقوق المؤلفين. وأعتقد أنه يجب أن يكون للحكومة نصيب، ولوضئلاً من حقوق المؤلفين حتى يكون لها مصلحة مزدوجة مادية وأدبية في الدفاع عنها.

(Ṣabrī, 1927)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

We would have liked the Egyptian legislation to become the precursor to this goal, because Egypt has a great need to

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<sup>81</sup> This new constitution was cancelled on 30 November 1934, when the country returned to the constitution of 1932 in the era of Nasīm Pasha (r. 1934-1936, d. 1938).

encourage scientific and literary renaissance, and the only way to encourage this renaissance is to protect the rights of authors. I think there should be a share, however little, for the government [with respect to] authors' rights, so that the government has a share, moral and material, in protecting these rights.

### Cultural and linguistic context

Muḥammad Ṣabrī (d. 1978) was an Egyptian author, historian and librarian, who was known as the first Egyptian to earn a PhD from the Sorbonne in Paris. In this article of 17 March 1927, entitled *Ḥuqūq al-mu'allifīn fī Miṣr, wa al-ṭarīqah al-ʿamaliyyah lil-muḥāfaẓah ʿalayhā* [Authors' rights in Egypt, and the practical ways to preserve them], he discusses new legislation on authors' rights.

The writer says that he is not a specialist in the law, but he wants to share his experience as an author. He appreciates the legislation that preserves the rights of authors, and he attributes its importance, especially for any future scientific renaissance in the country, to the increase in authorship in Egypt. He claims that some commercial publishers were exploiting this awakening recognition of the importance of writing, by engaging in dishonest practices (e.g., changing the name of the author, publishing only part of a book, or printing more than the agreed number of issues and selling some outside the country).

The writer shares a number of examples from the French experience in enacting legislation to preserve authors' rights, and then he proposes that the government share ownership of the authors' rights, so that it would also share moral and material interests in preserving those rights and would have an incentive to monitor the licensing of publishers. He concludes by explaining that he does not want to restrict the freedom of publishing – *ḥurriyyat al-nashr* – but simply wants to find a practical way to ensure effective regulation.<sup>82</sup>

In fact, this represents a development in authors' rights, taking the issue to a practical level and discussing the legislation and the ways of preserving these

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<sup>82</sup> The term *ḥurriyyat al-nashr* (freedom of publishing) is mentioned in the concluding paragraph of this article, which states that "No one should think that I want to restrict freedom of publication." Here, the term refers to the right of authors to publish their books, and no further details are available about what more was intended by the term, although it could also apply to newspapers, magazines, etc.

rights.<sup>83</sup> Although the writer suggests a share in these rights for the government (which might be seen from our current perspective as unacceptable interference), his objective is to ensure greater protection for the author's right to publish.

The influence of the elite who experienced life in Europe (especially in Paris) in conveying and copying Western experiences and legislation in the area of freedoms and rights is noticeable in this debate.

### Discussion of the term

According to the context discussed above, the term *ḥuqūq al-mu'allifīn* (authors' rights) refers to two types of rights: moral and material. By moral rights, the writer seems to refer to the right of writers to be identified by name as authors of their work. Material rights seem to have more to do with laws that control the copying of books (although they are not necessarily equated with what we today call copyright) and the writer's share of each copy sold.

#### 9.2.7. Terms of women's freedoms

**Term 1:** *tahrīr al-mar'ah* (liberation of women)

#### Text

وليس أدلّ برهاناً على ذلك من أننا نطالب للمرأة بحقوقها، وبيننا نطالب بتحريرها من التقاليد القديمة، وبيننا نُقدِّم على المطالبة لها بحق الانتخاب، وبيننا نفعل كل هذا، إذا حضرات الكاتبات الصحفيات لُمِّلَزْنَ بعضهن موقف الجمود التام، والبعض الآخر يشنُّ علينا الغارة ويقدم نفسه سلاحاً في يد خصومنا لمحاربتنا.

(Thābit, 1923)

#### Translation [translated by the researcher]

There is no greater evidence for this than that we demand women's rights, and while we demand that women be liberated from old traditions, and while we advance demands for her right to vote, while we do all this, some female journalists and writers commit themselves to completely rigid attitudes, while yet others attack us ferociously and offer themselves as weapons in the hands of our adversaries to fight us with.

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<sup>83</sup> The efforts to issue a law protecting the rights of authors began in 1927, but the actual law was not passed until 1954 (Society of authors, composers, and publishers of the Arab Republic of Egypt, n.d.).

## Cultural and linguistic context

It was the Revolution of 1919 that witnessed the beginning of an effective women's contribution to the public sphere. A group of approximately three hundred Egyptian women protested on 16 March 1919, on 20 March 1919, and on the following days, against the violent suppression of previous protests by occupation forces.

Taking note of the women's vital role, *Al-Wafd* (The Delegation) created a Central Committee for Egyptian Ladies in April 1919, with the mission of supporting the demands of the delegation for full independence. In the same period, a group of women's societies, characterised by their social interests, were established. According to Sālim (1984), women's associations had more of a social orientation than a political one at that time (p. 35; Rizq, 2005, pp. 280-289).

In the spring of 1923, female Egyptian activists – returning by train from Rome, where they had attended a conference of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance – arrived in Cairo and took off their veils in front of hundreds of women. This was considered a milestone in women's unveiling (Shaarawi, 1986) and a significant social change. In the same year, upon the opening of the first parliament after the Revolution of 1919, thousands of women protested in front of the parliament, demanding their political rights. This was said to demonstrate that *Al-Wafd* leaned more towards a nationalist point of view than a religious one, and this had “had broad implications for women, opening the door to greater integration in society” (Baron, 1994, p. 35).

In an article published on 5 November 1923, Munīrah Thābit, a lawyer, feminist and political activist, discusses the role of women's journalism and women's societies. She criticises the failure of many of these newspapers and societies to fulfil the demands to reform the situation of women, or more precisely, their failure to define women's issues. Thābit offers two examples:

- 1) Although there were many women's societies and female journalists and writers, hardly any of them protested against the abolition of the weekly newspaper *Al-Sufūr*, whose first issue had been published in Cairo in July 1915, and which was one of the few newspapers published after

World War I while the country was under British martial law (Ḥamzah 1985, p. 118; al-Maghāzī, 1978, pp. 202-203). It was categorised by Thābit as a strong advocate of women's rights, following the path of Qāsim Amīn.<sup>84</sup> According to the writer, the newspaper was abolished (a couple of months earlier) for publishing criticism of the government, although the restrictions and censorship of British martial law may have been the real reason (Baron, 1994, pp. 34-35).

- 2) Women journalists and women's societies failed to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the death of Qāsim Amīn, the social reformist and feminist activist who was the first to call for women's liberation.

### Discussion of the term

As the text indicates, the term *taḥrīr al-mar'ah* (liberation of women) was used to refer to women's liberation from "old traditions"; it was used in a more social, and less political, sense, and was normally related to issues such as education, work, and so on. Even though the term cannot be separated from politics, I would argue that it involved the liberation of social beliefs that functioned as chains preventing women from practising their rights. When compared to the term *ḥuqūq al-mar'ah* (women's rights), the term *taḥrīr al-mar'ah* (liberation of women) has a political orientation connected with rights, such as the right to vote, the right to stand for elections and so on. This term continues to convey the original meaning given it in its first appearance in the literature of Qāsim Amīn.

#### 9.2.8. Terms of political freedoms and rights

##### Term 1: *hurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom)

##### Text

إذا ما قلنا نريد العلم قالوا-في تصويب حرماننا منه- "هذه سياسة". وإذا قلنا: نريد الفنون، قالوا: "سياسة". وإذا قلنا: الزرع، قالوا: "سياسة". وإذا قلنا: الأمن، قالوا: "سياسة". حتى إذا قلنا: نحن جياع، قالوا: "سياسة".

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<sup>84</sup> Among those who contributed to the newspaper were Muṣṭafā °Abd al-Razzāq, philosopher and Islamic scholar (d. 1947); Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal, political and lawyer (d. 1956); and Aḥmad Amīn (1954), journalist and author (al-Maghāzī, 1978, pp. 203).

فهل يلامون إذا هم طرّقوا كل باب يلتمسون منه راحة العيش وتفريج الضيق؟ وهل بلغ من الحرية السياسية في مصر أن تصبح السياسة تكأة تستند إليها كل شركة تريد أن تعبت بعمالها وتستدر أرباحها من أقواتهم ودمائهم؟

(al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād, 1919)

#### **Translation** [translated by the researcher]

If we said that we wanted education, they would say, in order to justify its prohibition, "This is politics". If we said we want the arts, they would say, "It is politics". If we said we want agriculture, they would say that "It is politics". If we said we want security, they would say, "It is politics", and this would even be the case if we said we were hungry; they would say that "It is politics".

Should they therefore be blamed if they knocked on every door seeking a comfortable life and relief from distress? Does political freedom in Egypt become an excuse for politics to become a means for every company that wants to swindle and profiteer from the blood and sweat of its workers?

#### **Cultural and linguistic context**

Surprisingly, the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom), in reference to political activism, was used in texts of this period to convey a less valued meaning. This article, published on 11 September 1919, was written by <sup>°</sup>Abbās Maḥmūd al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād. He discusses the struggle of labourers in Egypt and defends their demands to make a living. Under the title *Ḥarakat al-<sup>°</sup>ummāl fī Miṣr; sinān al-siyāsah mushra<sup>°</sup> fī ṣudūrinā* [The movement of labour in Egypt: The lance of politics is directed at our chests], al-<sup>°</sup>Aqqād justifies the rights of workers to demand a better standard of living in light of rising prices for basic necessities. His lengthy article, which occupies five columns, is sufficient for understanding the circumstances that gave rise to these demands.

As a result of price rises and their impact on the cost of living, government employees demanded increases in their pay, and the government responded. Other groups of workers expressed similar demands through demonstrations, protests, strikes, and so on. According to the article, this labour movement became active after World War I (1914-1918), when groups of labourers and employers started to establish professional associations with the aim of "establishing a bond among labourers [who share the same profession] and



improving their moral and material situations.” This movement, described by the writer as in search of “economic objectives”, was blocked by political authorities on the grounds that it had underlying political aims. The newspapers (among them *Al-Ahrām*) advised workers to stop their strikes and protests in order to avoid harm (possibly by the authorities). Other Egyptian figures stated that the writer (whose name has not been given) also described the labourers and their guilds as a ‘political movement’.

The writer argues that the term ‘politics’ is clearly used as “a scarecrow” to frighten people from demanding improvements in their living conditions and to prevent them from satisfying their demands.

### **Discussion of the term**

It is obvious that the term ‘politics’ was a ‘forbidden word’ of pejorative meaning. The term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom) in this text refers to the power of the political authorities over the labourers whom it controlled, to prevent them from satisfying even the minimum level of demands, let alone actual legal entitlements.



Personal freedom	Religious freedom	Economic freedom/rights	Intellectual freedom/rights	Women's freedom	Political freedom/rights
<i>hurriyyah shakhshiyyah</i> (personal freedom)	<i>hurriyyat al-adyān</i> (freedom of beliefs)	<i>hurriyyat al-tijārah</i> (freedom of trade)	<i>hurriyyat al-ṣaḥāfah</i> (freedom of the press)	<i>tahrīr al-mar'ah</i> (liberation of women) <i>ḥuqūq al-mar'ah</i> (women's rights)	<i>hurriyyah siyāsiyyah</i> (political freedom)
<i>hurriyyat al-ra'y</i> (freedom of opinion)		<i>hurriyyah iqtisādiyyah</i> (economic freedom) <i>hurriyyat al-tijārah wa al-ṣinā'ah al-maḥaliyyah</i> (freedom of local trade and industry) <i>hurriyyah 'amalīyyah</i> (freedom of work)	<i>ḥuqūq al-mu'allifīn</i> (authors' rights)		<i>ḥaqq fī taqrīr al-maṣīr</i> (the right of self-determination) <i>ḥuqūq al-bilād</i> (the rights of the country) <i>ḥuqūq al-ummah</i> (nation's rights) <i>ḥuqūq waṭaniyyah</i> (national rights)
<i>hurriyyat al-ijtimā'</i> (freedom of assembly)		<i>ḥuqūq al-'ummāl</i> (labour rights)	<i>hurriyyat al-nashr</i> (freedom of publishing)		<i>hurriyyat al-intikhāb</i> (freedom to elect)

Table 10.1: The semantic field of freedoms and rights in the third period



## CHAPTER TEN

### Analysis of the World View of Freedoms and Rights in the Texts of the Third Period (Political Articles 1919-1952)

#### 10.0. Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the analysis of the terms discussed in Chapter Nine. This analysis takes the same format as in Chapters Six and Eight; the terms of freedoms and rights are categorised into sub-semantic fields, and the meaning of each term is identified by determining the associated entitlements and restrictions, in order to assess the evolution and continuity of terms over different historical periods.

#### 10.1. The semantic field of freedoms and rights in the third period

The terms conveying types of freedoms and rights found in the texts of the third period can be classified into six semantic fields that include all the main categories mentioned in the previous periods: personal, religious, economic, intellectual, women's rights (which is part of social rights), and political. Although this corpus is from only one source (*Al-Ahrām* newspaper), the qualitative expansion of the terms may be seen as a reflection of the quantitative expansion, since the relevant texts are greater in number than those found in the previous two periods put together.

In addition to the terms classified in these six semantic fields, there are two central terms that are included in the texts of this period that cannot be listed in any of the sub-fields: *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) and *ḥuqūq al-insān* (human rights).

The central term, *ḥurriyyah* (freedom), is used to convey three different meanings concerning political freedom:

- A. the political independence of the state from occupation or foreign interference, with self-determination of its own affairs;
- B. a just political system, with no clear reference to democracy in the sense of 'one person one vote'; and

### C. personal freedom in a liberal sense.

The central term of human rights: *ḥuqūq al-insān* was articulated in a clear reference to the principles of human rights as defined in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

Terms of rights involve the rights of the nation to freedom, as well as the rights of certain groups of people (e.g., labourers, women, and authors). These seemingly reflect the main concerns of the society and are very much linked to other struggles, both personal and national.

The terms listed in these fields (see Table 10.1) are analysed in the following section, in order to identify the change or continuity of associated entitlements, and what these semantic and lexical changes indicate at the conceptual level. The semantic features of each term are identified as they were in Chapters Six and Eight, with the symbol (+) indicating entitlements and (-) representing restrictions.

#### 10.1.1. Terms of personal freedoms

##### **Term 1:** *hurriyyah shakhsiyyah* (personal freedom)

- (+) The right of individuals to behave according to their own will in their personal affairs.
- (+) The status of being free from imprisonment, arrest or hindrances to movement.

##### **Term 2:** *hurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion)

- (+) The legal, constitutional right of individuals to express their personal views by means of speech, writing, artistic works, and the like, without being prevented from, or harmed for, doing so.
- (-) This freedom should be within the boundaries of constitutional law.

##### **Term 3:** *hurriyyat al-ijtimāʿ*<sup>c</sup> (freedom of assembly)

- (+) The legal right of individuals to hold civil gatherings in private places.
- (-) Public gatherings are not included.

- (-) These gatherings are subject to intervention by authorities at any time under the pretext of 'maintaining social order'.

#### **10.1.2. Terms of religious freedoms**

**Term 1:** hurriyyat al-adyān (freedom of beliefs)

- (+) The legal right to embrace any religion or belief system.

#### **10.1.3. Terms of economic freedoms and rights**

**Terms 1-3:** hurriyyat al-tijārah (freedom of trade; also expressed as hurriyyah iqtisādiyyah, or economic freedom), hurriyyah <sup>c</sup>amaliyyah (freedom of work), hurriyyat al-tijārah wa al-<sup>c</sup>sināh al-mahaliyyah (freedom of local trade and industry)

- (+) The liberation of the national economy, which can be achieved by raising the productivity of labour in the fields of trade, manufacturing, and agriculture.

**Term 4:** huqūq al-<sup>c</sup>ummāl (labour rights)

- (+) The right of labourers to demand increased wages and educational opportunities.
- (-) These rights require the consent of employers who hold power in the government and elsewhere.

#### **10.1.4. Terms of intellectual freedoms and rights**

**Term 1:** hurriyyat al-sahāfah (freedom of the press)

- (+) The legal and constitutional right of newspapers not to be subject to censorship, warnings, administrative suspension, or cancellation.
- (-) This right is restricted by the boundaries of the law, and it can be restricted further whenever it is necessary 'to maintain social order'.

**Term 2:** huqūq al-mu'allifīn (authors' rights)

- (+) The right of authors to be identified by name on the work they produce.

- (+) The material rights of the authors to a share of each copy of their work that is sold.

**Term 3:** hurriyyat al-nashr (freedom of publishing)

- (+) The right of authors to publish their writings.

#### 10.1.5. Terms of women's freedoms

**Term 1:** tahrīr al-mar'ah (liberation of women)

- (+) The right of women to engage in public life, including in education, work, and public affairs.

**Term 2:** huqūq al-mar'ah (women's rights)

- (+) The proposed political right of women to vote and elect representatives in the parliament.

#### 10.1.6. Terms of political freedoms and rights

**Term 1:** hurriyyah siyāsiyyah (political freedom)

- (-) No entitlement was mentioned in the term *hurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom), which was used in the text to refer to the power of the political authorities over the labourers, who were not allowed to protest or demand a living under the pretext that 'politics' was not allowed.

**Terms 2-6:** haqq fī taqrīr al-maṣīr (right of self-determination); found to be expressed in several terms such as huqūq al-bilād (the rights of the country); huqūq al-ummah (nation's rights); huqūq waṭaniyyah (national rights); haqq tabīʿī (instinctive right)

- (+) The right of the nation to be free from foreign domination in its political affairs, and to have full self-determination.

**Term 7:** haqq al-intikhāb (right to vote)

- (+) The constitutional right to vote and to choose representatives in the Parliament.
- (-) The right is restricted to adult men.



## 10.2. The world view of freedoms and rights in the third period

The experience of crucial, and perhaps contradictory, national events in this period, which even included a political revolution against both foreign occupiers and absolute rulers, was followed by political negotiations with the British. Although the British maintained a strong presence, Egypt was recognised as an independent country and was able to write a new constitution. All of these events in the political sphere led to an emergence of ideas and thoughts, especially among those involved in political and social debates and national movements, about rights and freedoms because the focus of the main events was on achieving public liberation. These new ideas were reflected in the language and vocabularies of freedoms and rights in the media, which was the main means of communicating publicly.

The texts consulted for this period comprise a sample of political articles by a diverse group of writers in *Al-Ahrām* newspaper. These were chosen to represent a broad view of the different usages and understandings of the terms, so as to be able to map the variations in vocabularies and meanings of the main types of freedom being considered.

Oddly, the first impression is that the terms used, with respect to their actual entitlements, are not consistent with the crucial events in the liberation struggle. For the first time, the central term of freedom, *ḥurriyyah*, is found in the texts to be conveying three different meanings, each of which is concerned with a different aspect of the struggle for social and political change. As in the texts of the second period, one meaning of *ḥurriyyah* refers to the political independence of the nation.

The second meaning concerns a just political system; this is associated with people's demands for tangible political change that liberates them from political systems that contribute to their struggles and prevent them from achieving a better quality of life. No details are given about what this liberation would look like in practice, and this omission implicitly supports the previous argument that these concepts of freedom are linked to a sociopolitical reality by which people interpret freedom in relation to their needs in life. In this period, the general

population became involved in making public demands; this was no longer the exclusive domain of the elites.

The third meaning of *ḥurriyyah* refers to the freedom that individuals enjoy, with a clear distinction being made between the status of the nation – *istiqlāl* (independence), and the status of an individual being free – *ḥurriyyah* (freedom). This shift in meaning from a national to a personal orientation reflects a concomitant shift from a concern for the nation to a concern for individuals, in which the notion of their rights starts to appear in the language of debate. This linguistic, and implicitly political, situation has implications for the development of other terms/types of freedoms in the later stages of this period, when other types of individual freedoms start to appear.

An intelligentsia who were involved in journalism used newspapers as a means of introducing these ideas to the readers, and many of them appreciated this opportunity to educate and interact with the public. In keeping with these new uses of the term, there were a number of articles published in this period which introduced the notion of democracy and human rights from a theoretical perspective. They also explained the historical background, with references to Western democracy for the ordinary Arab reader. The intellectual debate over these concepts did not refer, either directly or indirectly, to the Egyptian political situation, even though the country was involved in a constitutional experiment and was establishing a group of democratic institutions and practices. This suggests that the liberation movement, even in periods of struggle for freedom, was always subject to restrictions imposed by the political authorities, who limited the debate to the theoretical level and impeded any actual development of freedoms and rights. Similarly, the entitlements were limited and related to the minimum demands; they reflected the ongoing struggles in different aspects of life.

There were only two terms in the field of personal freedoms, both related to 'physical' freedom, or the status of being free from imprisonment, arrest and hindrances to movement. This meaning of freedom may seem unambitious, but it actually was fundamental in the context of a liberation struggle. Being under foreign occupation obviously compresses demands for freedom to their

essential elements, and this affects the development of concepts of freedom such that the associated entitlements are minimal.

The term *ḥurriyyat al-ra'y* (freedom of opinion, or actually the freedom to express opinions) was granted in an Article in both the Constitutions of 1923 and 1930. It was also mentioned in texts reporting public participation in actual political events such as elections and public meetings; in this sense, the term was not confined only to elites. In reality, this freedom was not practised much, though, because people did not recognise the concept or the right. Although it was permitted by the constitution, in practice, it was broadly interpreted in ways that restricted people's freedoms and rights, and there was an absence of active and influential intellectual debates that could serve to educate the public about these entitlements.

In the same manner, *ḥurriyyat al-ijtimā'*<sup>c</sup> (freedom of assembly) was restricted, although it was granted by the constitutional texts of 1923 and 1930. Texts concerning actual events did not register any violations of this type of freedom.

In this politically active period, the terms *siyāsah* (politics) and *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom) involved a very negative freedom where the state power overshadowed people's legitimate rights and demands. A struggle for liberation from foreign occupation does not necessarily indicate a radical transformation in the political system; if the foreign powers are simply replaced by an authoritarian regime, there may still be a lack of intellectual activities and critical assessments of freedom and liberty, with a failure to develop either the theoretical underpinnings of freedom or the institutions necessary to protect and practise it.

The new semantic addition in the field of political freedoms involved the right to vote (although it was restricted to men). This addition clearly involved a constitutional experiment of parliamentary life where *all* men, not just the elites, were eligible to vote. Likewise, some women also demanded the right to vote; consequently, the term for women's rights was expanded to include political rights.

Religious freedom, which re-emerged after being absent in the second period, was unlimited, with everyone entitled to choose any belief system. The cultural

context shows that its 'semantic expansion' was again influenced by the foreign power of the occupiers, who sought to enact laws to protect the rights of their own citizens. The lack of development in these terms also applies to women's freedoms; neither of them witnessed any change on either the lexical or semantic level.

The field of economic freedom was seen as less subject to restrictions and thus more likely to expand semantically and/or lexically. It did witness the addition of a term regarding the rights of labourers, who constituted the majority of Egyptian workers. Their struggle to earn a living was discussed in a number of articles, but with no reference to any rights guaranteed by law. Instead, their demands were discussed – at the minimum level – in the context of coming to agreements with influential employers, with emphasis on the fact that these demands could not be 'political'! Surprisingly, the so-called intellectuals and political activists who were considered to be socialists or liberals were the ones called upon to dissuade labourers from pursuing their demands. Their cultural authority was put to use in restricting and opposing political development towards people's rights.

On the other side, economic freedom was introduced as part of a more fundamental and practical view of liberation, which maintains that economic liberation is the basis for all other types of liberation, including political. This practical view of liberation considers the productivity of labourers in the fields of trade, manufacturing and agriculture to be an essential factor in the national economy, which is the foundation of national independence. This argument, made by economy-oriented activists, gives an idea of the role of civil society (such as The Society of Supporters of Freedom of Opinion) in introducing concepts relevant to freedoms and rights (see Section 9.2.5).

Interestingly, although there was an obvious and important connection between economic and political liberation, 'politics' was always avoided as a 'forbidden' word in any context that anticipated national liberation from foreign occupation. The term 'political freedom' was only acceptable when it was used to refer to national independence. (For example, the demands of labourers were treated suspiciously when it came to individual entitlements; but when they were linked to the national interest, satisfying them became a national mission with a valued

meaning). These were terms that reflected a nationalist orientation as writers linked the notion of lifting restrictions on the economy with a positive impact on the national income, and the implicit reflection of economic freedom in “all other types of freedom”.

The link made to the economic activities of individuals, which obviously require a degree of freedom, is very similar to the concept of economic freedom expressed previously by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and °Abduh. It is obvious that writers in all three periods felt freer to write about economic concepts, since they did not explicitly include culturally or religiously forbidden ideas.

There was also development in the field of intellectual freedoms. In the previous period, the focus was on expressing thoughts for educational-oriented purposes, and this freedom was interpreted as encompassing ‘useful’ and ‘beneficial’ ideas only. In the texts of this period, it becomes less restricted and less subject to such standards. Also, in the texts of the previous period, the terms of intellectual freedom were called for, in the abstract, (i.e., freedom of the press and of cultural institutions), and they began to be recognised in the constitution of this period. Although the previous period had a greater number of terms in the field of intellectual freedoms, there was no mention of the freedom of debate or the freedom to research. This suggests that the educationalist interests of writers such as al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and °Abduh had been overshadowed by historical events that became the driving force behind media discussions and the central political concerns of the public. The new term in the field of intellectual freedoms is *ḥuqūq al-mu’allifīn* (authors’ rights), which appears in the context of a discussion involving new legislation to preserve those rights. Although actual legislation was not enacted until 1954 (see 9.2.6), the discussions provide a sense of the conceptual development of the term.

In general, what is new in this period is that the terms of freedoms and rights become less abstract and more involved with actual circumstances. Terms of freedoms of assembly, opinion and journalism were discussed in the context of Articles of the constitution. Terms of religious freedom for foreigners and authors’ rights, on the other hand, were mentioned in the context of provisional laws. The right to vote was an actual right practised by men and demanded for women. The discussion of economic freedom involved an actual association

that provided a national vision of liberation based on a view of economics as the foundation for all other types of liberation.

The debate, as it appears in the texts of this period, is mainly concerned with freedoms that were actually intended to be practised. Despite the fact that some terms are limited and did not witness significant change, the public debate is itself a form of change for the better. This debate should not be overvalued, though, for it still reflects gaps in the law, shows little expansion of actual entitlements, and is subject to political restrictions.

In conclusion, the world view of freedoms and rights can be characterised thus:

- Rights and freedoms are to be bestowed by the constitution.
- Rights and freedom that are bestowed by the constitution should be enacted through legislation in order to be practised.
- People demand to practise these rights.
- Civil society contributes to spreading awareness and introducing projects related to national political freedom.
- People are involved in a public debate involving these rights and freedom, their scope and determination.
- Although taking steps toward being practised, these rights and freedom are still very much confined and subject to political restrictions.
- Intellectual and political elites are responsible for limiting these rights and freedoms, either through political actions (e.g., when *Al-Wafd* negotiated an agreement with the occupiers) or when they justify restrictions on the demands or practice of freedoms and rights (as seen in the writings of Salāmah Mūsā and other activists). Although professional intellectuals (lawyers, politicians, and authors) took part in the public debate over these freedoms and rights, this was a vehicle to gain public support, rather than to expand these freedoms and rights in theory and, consequently, in practice.

It can be concluded that a limited change is found in the lexical and semantic aspects of the terms in this third (and final) period of this chronological

investigation. These changes seem compatible with the political and historical changes occurring at the time and with the events that helped achieve a degree of national independence, a constitutional experiment, the practice of parliamentary life, and subsequent public participation and activism in political life.

The next, and final, chapter considers the main findings of the research, its contribution to the field, and recommendations for future research.





## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### Conclusion

#### **11.0. Introduction**

This chapter concludes the research by briefly reviewing the findings of the research as answers to the research questions, illustrating the contribution of this research to Arabic historical semantics and Arabic historical linguistics, and offering recommendations for further studies.

#### **11.1. Findings of the research**

The challenge faced by Arab political writers (mainly Egyptians), when they first introduced the issue of freedoms and rights, was that the writers were very restricted politically and culturally, but this seems not to have been the only reason behind the limited development of the vocabularies of freedoms and rights and the semantic meanings of the entitlements to which they refer. Although al-Ṭaḥṭawī's semantic contribution was limited, he attempted to provide a basic framework of freedoms and rights, which could be considered as merely an intellectual product of individuals; some of those freedoms were subject to restrictions that were neither political nor cultural.

In the second period, the debate over freedoms and rights was an outcome of the new political reality; it involved people's political demands, but although the public was engaged, the debate over freedoms and rights was limited to the intellectual elite, who claimed the entitlement of central rights for their own class.

The third period was known as the liberal phase because it witnessed constitutionally elected government, although it did not reflect a particularly advanced contribution to the development of freedoms and rights.

The semantic analysis of the entitlements to which individual terms are intended to refer, along with the pattern of events on the ground, reflects a modest level of intended entitlements for the Egyptian people. Although the public were

engaged in political events, with the encouragement of the government, the absence of intellectual debate over freedoms and rights that actually left a lasting legacy was very much connected to the absence of semantic meaning these terms actually had, given that they were decoupled from genuine entitlements in practice.

The elected authority seemingly employed the debate in the media as a means of allowing people to express their opinions within a seemingly democratic atmosphere, but in the event, the government was completely in control.

Chapters Five and Six investigated the terms of freedoms and rights which first appeared in the writings of Rifā<sup>h</sup> al-Ṭaḥṭāwī as a result of his experience of French life and literature during his stay in Paris (1826–1831). Although other sources of Egyptian writing, such as *Al-Ahrām*, were also consulted as sources of data, relevant terms were not found elsewhere in that first period.

It has been found that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī conceived of the idea of freedoms and rights as those to which every human being should be (conditionally) entitled, able to act according to his own will and be protected from abuse by the authorities; these ideas indicated that his thoughts on the matter were in accord with fair and ‘just’ law (see Section 5.2.1).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī has been credited for his translation of the French Charter of 1814 and for his lexical contribution in having rejuvenated classical words to express new concepts of freedom in their ‘modern political’ sense. With his definition of *ḥurriyyah* (the central term of freedom), he is recognised as having made a semantic contribution by providing an explanation of freedom that is consistent with the modern meaning of freedom to the Arab reader. The Arabic term of freedom clearly reflected its original European meaning, drawn from French political-cultural events.

At the conceptual level, the five categorical terms of freedom he produced do not refer to actual practices and activities that people are entitled to engage in or practise; hence he attempted to introduce an a theoretical framework for establishing new shared norms that might later contribute to creating new and further developed types of freedoms and rights.

Following al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's era, these terms were largely unavailable in the political media (i.e., in *Al-Ahrām*, a primary source for this research) of the early 1870s, owing to the conceptual limitations discussed in Chapter Four. Subsequent data were mainly found in the political articles of Muḥammad ʿAbduh that were published in *Al-Waḡāʾiʿ* newspaper, and especially the articles published during the ʿUrābī Revolution, when ʿAbduh was involved in various political activities and the political events that followed. Therefore, Chapters Seven and Eight, which were concerned with terms of freedom in the second period, mainly consulted these articles and others published in *Al-Ahrām* up until 1918, the year before the Revolution of 1919.

The actual contributions to the concepts of freedoms and rights in this second period were founded mainly on the recognition that these entitlements required the establishment of political institutions and legal systems. The new terms produced in this period were found to convey entitlements to political practices; however, they were limited to the educated elite. Other terms having to do with educating the general public were in the interest of enabling the public to participate effectively in building the nation – and this may have implied their political participation.

Although these entitlements were abstract and provisional, the argument was made that, in most cases, they were to be guaranteed by the legal system (mentioned in the context of establishing the new constitution) and were thus shaped according to shared norms and more secular conventions.

In addition to these politically oriented types of entitlements, a new concept of women's freedom appeared during this period when Qāsim Amīn discussed the eligibility of women to be educated, to unveil and to engage in work. No legal entitlements were referred to in this respect, as the concept was new and abstract, albeit with social connotations.

The third period did not demonstrate extensive contributions to the development of freedoms and rights. The terms of freedoms and rights were found in political articles published in *Al-Ahrām* and written by writers of diverse backgrounds. At the lexical level, the variety of vocabulary reflects aspects of lexical expansion that cannot be understood without examining the semantic level and the entitlements to which the terms refer.

This third period saw activist groups publicly introducing provisional freedoms or rights, rather than individuals concerned with the conceptual level alone, as was the case in the previous period. In the texts discussed, it is apparent that when individual activists or societies demanded rights or freedoms, or they discussed new, provisional types of freedom in the press, they took care to avoid any reference to politics. They felt at ease suggesting and debating types of freedoms that were not related to politics and not intended to entitle people to participate in any activities that might be considered political. In this politically active period, which witnessed public engagement in protests and other political activities, the term *ḥurriyyah siyāsiyyah* (political freedom) reflected negative and less valued meanings.

Terms that always reflected the struggle under occupation or tyrannical authority, such as *ḥuqūq al-<sup>c</sup>ummāl* (labour rights) and *ḥurriyyah shakhṣiyyah* (personal freedom), had limited value. As for freedoms and rights designed to be guaranteed by law and included in legal documents such as a constitution, treaties or agreements, there were always legal restrictions that made them open to interpretation, and these could be used as a pretext for abusing people's rights.

One can conclude that public participation in the demands and activities of this period was always controlled, directed, and used for self-interested purposes to gain support, not only by the authorities but also by the political elite who led the movement and articulated its demands; it is for these reasons that there is a limited development of these terms. In this context, it is remarkable that individual intellectuals with Islamic backgrounds are the ones credited with introducing Arabic readers to the vocabularies of freedoms and rights.

## **11.2. Contribution of the research**

This research contributes in several ways, in both theory and practice, to the existing research in the field of Arabic historical semantics. In the area of theory, it provides a historical semantic analysis of the changes that occurred in terms of freedoms and rights over a relatively extended period of more than eighty years (1869-1952), and it establishes a corpus of more than one thousand political texts of Egyptian writings in the field of human rights, representing

diverse views from writers of different orientations; these reflect the language of the media at that time.

The results indicate what these terms were actually meant to refer to with regard to people's entitlements (i.e., actions and practices) as well as their restrictions and limitations (both of which are encompassed in the core meanings of these terms). The research traces the manner in which these terms (and, consequently, the practices attached to them) changed over time, as well as the changes in connotative meaning attached to these terms. It closely examines the historical and cultural factors involved in the production of the texts.

The research also provides a methodological contribution to the study of Arabic historical semantics, especially those involving cultural meanings that are open to diverse interpretation. Given a general lack of theoretical approaches and methodological tools with which to analyse the corpus, the research provides a model of analysis which can be adopted and applied in future studies; it does so by integrating different approaches and theories including Izutsu (2002b), Agius (1984), Naşr (1990), semantic field theory and componential analysis theory. Integration of the approaches of different authors made it possible to create a model for analysing the corpus in a way that minimised pre-judgment of the meanings. This model exemplifies a workable type of analysis that can be adapted to other studies concerned with meanings, in other groups of terms and at other times in history. By contributing to a methodology for the study of historical concepts, we come to the third contribution of this research.

This dissertation provides a historical contribution that traces the history of a vital theme – human rights – which is fundamental to various disciplines in the humanities. In this respect, the research is relevant to disciplines including law, politics, philosophy and history. Its multi-disciplinary nature lends itself to making a contribution in different fields of knowledge. The research provides for understanding different aspects of Egyptian society and daily life, and it paves the way for understanding the fundamental changes that this society has undergone, as well as the conceptual barriers it has encountered in terms of what human rights mean; these experiences prepared the ground of the Arab Spring.

In short, by examining the history of the shifting meanings of a group of Arabic terms, which had largely not been systematically examined, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the research could contribute to the important work that a future Arabic historical dictionary could do. It is a matter of fact that the history of Arabic as a language has not been recorded. Maşlūh (2004) flagged this issue, stating:

The history of this language is one of the most ambiguous histories of human languages; it is almost a language with no history. Fifty years of modern Arabic linguistics have not succeeded in changing this bitter scientific reality (p. 253).

The contribution of this research is located at the nexus of this central problem. Hence, the research provides only a sample of the studies in this area, but this could open the door for further exploration by subsequent researchers.

### **11.3. Recommendations for future studies**

Several recommendations can be derived from the thesis in terms of lines of enquiry that future researchers may wish to explore.

First, this study focused only on the vocabularies of freedoms and rights in the print media of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, in reference to the revolutions occurring at specific times. It would be interesting to apply the same methodology to consider the further development of terms to do with freedoms and rights in other important periods of the history of Egypt; for instance during the era of Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir (r. 1956–1970) as used in the influential media of the time. This was an era that witnessed transitions in many aspects of Egyptian politics and life, and the impact of those changes is still felt in Egypt today. The new republic that replaced the monarchy was led by a charismatic, influential leader who adopted an anti-imperialism discourse, on the one hand, while his one-party state controlled the media, politics, and all other aspects of public life, raising slogans of national liberation such as *Lā ṣawt yaʿlū fawq ṣawt al-maʿrakah* (No voice rises above the voice of the battle)

and *Kull al-ḥurriyyah lil-shaʿb, wa lā ḥurriyyah li aʿdāʾ al-shaʿb* (All the freedom is for the people, no freedom for the enemies of the people).<sup>85</sup>

Second, it is worth considering the evolution of political vocabularies of religious figures, under different political circumstances and different political regimes, such as those used in the Friday sermons – *khuṭbah* – in al-Azhar Mosque, for example. This would be useful for unveiling the relationship between what is religious and what is political in the Middle East and the way that religion shapes the awareness of political issues among the public, especially in Arab-Islamic countries where religion is a fundamental component of public life.

Third, future research could usefully consider a comparative analysis of the usage of human rights terms such as *ḥurriyyah* (freedom), *dīmuqrāṭiyyah* (democracy), *rafʿiyyah* (reactionism), and *taqaddumiyyah* (progressivism) in the discourse of Egyptian parties of different ideological orientations, including socialism, the Muslim Brotherhood, and others, to identify contrastive meanings in which the game theory of linguistic pragmatics could be adopted. This would demonstrate the vital role of the language (and lexical semantic theories) in analysing ideological conflicts in which the terms are loaded with ideological orientations and political positions, and it would trace the evolution of these positions – through the change of the language – over different periods and in different political circumstances.

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<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, it would also be worth studying the vocabularies of freedoms and rights of the new digital media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) with reference to their use among the leading activists of the recent Egyptian revolution (as well as other revolutions of the Arab Spring), as these media are widely considered to have played a crucial role in organising these revolutions.





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